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[A TURN OF FORTUNE'S WHEEL.]

ETHEL ARBUTHNOT;

OR,

WHO'S HER HUSBAND?

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Amy Robsart," "The Bondage of Brandon,"
"Breaking the Charm," &c., &c.

CHAPTER IX.

HOMELESS AND FRIENDLESS.

Such scenes had tempered with a pensive grace
The maiden luster of that faultless face;
Had hung a sad and dream-like spell upon
The gliding music of her silver tone,
And shaded the soft soul, which loved to lie
In the deep pathos of that sparkling eye.

THE REEL.

It is only dire misfortune that shows us what we are capable of, and brings out the sterling metal that we have within us. The strong are strengthened by trials, and the weak unhappily succumb to the pressure. Not so was it with Ethel.

She faced the storm bravely. Riches and fashionable society had not brought her happiness. It was hard to have to go out and battle with the cold world, after living the luxurious life of a lady of fortune, yet she did not shrink from doing so.

Sir Brandon Arbuthnot had risen from the grave as it were, and this very substantial ghost

was legally entitled to oust her from the splendid property she had considered hers. Not for one moment did she weakly and selfishly repine. Heaven had given her health and strength. With these on her side, she prepared to enter on the bitter struggle which this unexpected turn of fortune's wheel had forced upon her.

In this hour of tribulation her greatest concern was for her mother, as Mrs. Arbuthnot had broken down entirely under the infliction. She had got to love Oak Hall, and the idle life she had lived pleased her. To give up the liveried servants who waited upon her, and relinquish the easy carriages in which she had ridden, was to Ethel nothing. Rich jewels and fine dresses she looked upon as superfluous gauds. To her mother they had become all in all, and were necessities of her existence. The dainty viands under which the table groaned every day, and the choice wines, were creature comforts which she longed for, while her daughter could afford to despise them, preferring in her Spartan simplicity a simple chop and a glass of water.

When they quitted the hotel where they had gained the distressing intelligence that they were paupers and usurpers, Mrs. Arbuthnot gave way utterly. Leaning back on the soft cushions which she imagined she would never press again, she burst into a flood of hysterical tears, and it was in vain that Ethel strove to console her. She bemoaned her hard fate, spoke of welcoming death rather than facing the inevitable poverty before her, and with childish chagrin abused Sir Brandon as the most selfish and unfeeling of men.

"My dear mother," said Ethel, "try to be brave for my sake. How often have you urged me to bear up under unmerited suffering. Be-

cause we are thrown on the world isn't any reason why we should despair. Let us feel glad to leave this gilded misery. Work will occupy our thoughts, and we cannot fail to be happy if we do our duty in that station of life in which it has pleased the Almighty to place us."

Mrs. Arbuthnot shook her head disapprovingly.

"At your age," she replied, "you can adapt yourself to circumstances; at mine I cannot. Never shall I be happy again. I had looked upon this house as ours for our lifetime, and I liked the life we were leading. This will kill me; I feel certain that I shall not survive the shock. I could find it in my heart to wish that the ship would founder that is bringing the detestable Sir Brandon back."

"Mother, this is unworthy of you."

"Why did he allow reports of his death to be circulated? He has no right to come here and rob two poor women of their inheritance."

"It is we who have no right to it," replied Ethel. "I wish to heaven you would be more reasonable. Your grief concerns me more than the loss of the property."

"What are we to do?"

"Work as we did before. I am not ashamed of earning an honest livelihood, and I am sure I can support you. My exertions will bring in enough for both of us."

"At what can you work? Every walk of life is overcrowded with women, poor creatures. The men have everything in the world, and there is little or nothing left for the women," said Mrs. Arbuthnot, bitterly.

"I am well though plainly educated," answered Ethel, calmly, "and I can be a

governess, or serve in a shop as a sales lady." "A nice come down for one of the leading families in the county. I shall die of shame!"

"That is false pride!" Ethel exclaimed. "As we sprang up like mushrooms from nothing, let us accept the situation. It is not as if we had been born in the purple and were used to fine things all our lives."

"Oh, it is all very well for you to talk," said Mrs. Arbuthnot. "Wait till you are put to the test. You will find a great difference between the reality and the ideal. Even if you succeed in getting badly paid for work, you will wish for the comforts of Oak Hall just as much as I shall."

"That remains to be seen," was Ethel's confident reply.

Mrs. Arbuthnot lapsed into an obstinate silence, which lasted until they reached home. Her face was the picture of despair, and it was evident that she was suffering keenly at the prospect of this ejection. As for Ethel, she caused the family plate to be brought into the drawing-room. She placed an inventory of everything on the table. The casket containing her jewels and her more expensive dresses she laid on the sofa.

She determined that she would not take a thing away from the Hall which she did not absolutely require. Sir Brandon should see that the "vulgar people," as he had called them, had at least a feeling of honesty. While she was performing this melancholy duty, her mother grovelled on the sofa, at times sobbing violently, at others talking incoherently and abusing Sir Brandon, whom she accused as the author of all their misfortunes. By the time Ethel had examined her bank-book and seen how much ready money she had to hand over, Mr. Clews was announced.

"I am ready for you!" she exclaimed, with a pleasant smile.

"Thank you," replied the lawyer, putting his hat and stick on the piano. "But may I ask, my dear young lady, what means all this display of merchandise?"

"Oh! I am giving up what does not belong to me."

"Yet the jewels and those handsome dresses—"

"Were bought with Sir Brandon's money. I shall only take two morning dresses with me. There is the bank-book and my purse. We shall leave the house absolutely penniless, unless you like to play the part of a good Samaritan and lend us a trifle, which I will promise to repay out of my first earnings, no matter how small the sum may be."

Mr. Clews adjusted his spectacles and regarded her admiringly.

"I never heard of such self-denial," he replied. "Sir Brandon would never claim your personal effects."

"No matter. I feel I have no right to them. All I regret is that I cannot give him the money I have spent during our residence here, but I have not been extravagant, and he will find a handsome balance at the bankers."

"Noble girl!"

"Oh! there is nothing noble about it. I simply wish to do myself justice, and, if I may use the expression, render unto Caesar the things which are Caesars."

It was Mr. Clews's turn to smile now.

"I wish you were my daughter," he remarked, "for I should indeed be proud of you. Lend you a small sum? Why of course I will. There is twenty pounds. Don't talk about payment. When you want some more write to me for it. I haven't been working all these years for nothing, and have got a penny or so put away safely."

Ethel accepted the four five-pound notes which he tendered her, and with business-like alacrity, wrote out an acknowledgment, which she pushed over to him.

"What's that?" he demanded.

"An I O U," she replied. "You would not recover at law unless you had that. Many thanks. Now, sir, will you, on behalf of your client, Sir Brandon Arbuthnot, go over everything, with the inventory, and seal up all cup-

boards and things of that kind. My mother and I will leave here this afternoon."

"As you please, Miss Arbuthnot."

The old lady had been listening to the conversation, and she could bear no more. Starting up she looked wildly at the lawyer.

"Leave here to-day?" she cried.

"Why not, mamma?" answered Ethel. "Is there any use in prolonging the agony?"

"I am talking to Mr. Clews, and not to you," replied Mrs. Arbuthnot; "and I ask you, sir, as a lawyer, whether there is any necessity for this indecent haste. Why, the hateful man has not arrived in England yet."

"I am happy to say," replied Mr. Clews, "that Captain Hammersley has empowered me to allow you to stay here for a fortnight, at the expiration of which time Sir Brandon is expected to arrive at Southampton; he also sent an apology for the language he used in connection with your names, as he is now satisfied that you are perfect ladies."

"I knew it," she exclaimed. "No one could have the heart to turn me out at a moment's notice. Captain Hammersley looked a gentleman, every inch of him. Convey my regard and thanks to him, please, Mr. Clews."

"Certainly," with pleasure.

"Do nothing of the sort!" cried Ethel. "I intend to give you possession at once."

"Are you mad, Ethel?" asked her mother.

"Far from it. I am simply adopting the course most congenial to my feelings."

"And I? Am I not to be considered? I have never found you undutiful before."

"Mamma!" said Ethel, sternly. "I must confess I am surprised that you have not more pride and self-respect. Why should we linger here on tolerance? Take the dignified course, and show Sir Brandon that we do not wish to be beholden to him or his deputy for even an hour's grace. Surely, we ought to give him a fortnight to purify the Hall, after the presence of the 'vulgar people' in it for so many months."

"I am nobody," meeked poor Mrs. Arbuthnot.

"That phrase has affected you very deeply," said Mr. Clews; "but I beg you to forget it, since the captain has apologized. He did not know you then."

"There are some words, sir," answered Ethel, "which once spoken can never be recalled. They may be forgiven, but never forgotten."

"And those are of that kind?"

"They are."

"Very well," said the lawyer. "Since I see you are determined, I will proceed to execute what to me, I declare upon my honour, is a very painful duty."

He took up the inventory, rang for a candle and sealing-wax, and going all over the house, sealed up everything of value, just as if a death had occurred. The servants soon learnt what had happened, and gathered about in little knots, being somewhat reassured as to their own fate when the lawyer informed them, through the medium of the butler, that he should discharge none of them, and leave their future in the hands of Sir Brandon when he returned.

Ethel talked kindly but firmly to her mother, at last convincing her that it was best to go. And they proceeded to pack their things. When their boxes were corded, and placed in the hall, the carriage was ordered to drive them to the station, it being Ethel's intention to go for the present to Morecambe, a large manufacturing town about twenty miles off.

Trade was flourishing there, and she fancied it would be easy to obtain the employment of which she stood in need. While they were waiting for Mr. Clews to come downstairs, that they might wish him good-bye, the carriage drove up. The servants, one by one, had respectfully intimated their regret at the turn affairs had taken. Only a footman remained to place the luggage on the carriage.

At that juncture, much to their annoyance, they espied Lady Woodruffe's equipage coming up the avenue, it, doubtless, being her ladyship's intention to pay them an afternoon call.

Ethel could have wished to be spared the interview; but as it was unavoidable she prepared to face the ordeal with her usual courage. Lady Woodruffe was by herself. That was one comfort.

Tom was not with her, and Ethel escaped that infliction. Alighting from her victoria she held out her hand, then withdrew it, and looking at the luggage piled up in the hall, exclaimed:

"My dear Ethel, my very dear Mrs. Arbuthnot, what does all this mean?"

"Just what it implies," replied Ethel.

"Don't ask me, responded Mrs. Arbuthnot, having recourse to the inevitable pocket-handkerchief, and snivelling mildly.

"But, really, you know," continued her ladyship, "we cannot have you running away to Brighton at the most interesting time of the year for the country; all the shooting and fox-hunting men are here. Soon we shall have the winter and Christmas upon us. What shall we do without you? It will be a positive loss."

"A gain, I think, Lady Woodruffe," said Ethel.

"To lose you, a gain? My dear Ethel, I don't understand you."

"We are going away."

"That's palpable to anyone with eyes," replied her ladyship.

"And we shall never come back again."

"Going to shut up the place. Oh! Ethel, my pet, do not say that. There is my son Tom sighing his heart out about you, and I don't know how many others. Have pity on some one of the poor boys."

"Let me explain," exclaimed Ethel. "I see you have not heard the news."

"News! What news?"

Ethel nerved herself for an heroic effort.

"Sir Brandon Arbuthnot is not dead!"

"Not dead?" repeated her ladyship.

"No; he is coming back from India in a fortnight to claim his own, and we are going away to make room for him."

Lady Woodruffe was completely overpowered by this startling intelligence. She had no fan with her, but she held in her hand a paper she had been reading while driving, and she screwed this up, fanning herself vigorously with it.

"Then you are not an heiress," she said, slowly and deliberately.

"No, indeed. I believe they call me a vulgar person and a pauper," replied Ethel.

"Quite right too," cried Lady Woodruffe, growing very red in the face. "How dare you come into the county under false pretences?"

"I did not do so."

"I say you did. It was your duty to ascertain that Sir Brandon was really dead, as reported, before you took possession of the property, that's what everyone said. Sir Talford knew what he was doing when he kept you at a distance. Many a time have I fought your battle, and what return did I get for it?"

"I am not aware," said Ethel, "that there was any necessity for you to fight for me," answered Ethel.

"I did do it, you—you viper; and the return I got for it was that you wanted to entrap my son into marrying you."

"Really, this is too absurd."

"There is no absurdity about it. Thank Heaven, my poor Tom has escaped your artful wiles."

"I rejected your son."

"He never proposed to you, miss."

"Pardon me, that is true; but I gave him to understand that, if he did I would not have him."

"Ah! yes; that is all very well," said Lady Woodruffe. "Perhaps, Miss Arbuthnot, you had your reasons. My Tom is good enough for any girl in the county. There are strange tales floating about in connection with you."

"Are there?" replied Ethel. "I hope they interest you, Lady Woodruffe."

"Not much; but I think Sir Brandon's solicitor ought to interest himself in your doings. I suppose you are making off with all you can get away with."

At this cruel speech Ethel coloured up to the temples. It hurt her more than any of the unkind things that her ladyship had hitherto indulged in.

"I do not think it very ladylike for you to insult me in my own house," she said.

"Your own house?" echoed Lady Woodruffe, contemptuously. "By your own confession it belongs to another. I shall make it my business to find out Sir Brandon's lawyer and tell him you are taking things away."

There was a light footstep on the stairs.

"Eh! What is that?" cried a voice; "Sir Brandon's lawyer. Here he is, ma'am."

Lady Woodruffe put her glass in her eye and looked at him through that gold-rimmed medium.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"Mr. Clews, of Bedford Row, London; at your service. Did I hear you say you wanted to see me? I act for Sir Brandon Arbuthnot."

"Ahem! The fact is, these fraudulent people are going away. Do you know that?"

"Perfectly, madame. Perfectly well aware of it."

"And I presume they have taken nothing that does not belong to them?"

"On the contrary, Miss Ethel Arbuthnot has behaved in the most exemplary and unparalleled manner," replied Mr. Clews.

"Indeed!" ejaculated her ladyship, elevating her eyebrows in a suspicious manner.

"The young lady has only known of her cruel fate about four hours. She has permission to stay here another fortnight. She may take what she likes. Now, what has she done?"

"How can I tell?"

"She has given up everything, even the money in her purse, and she goes away with almost what she stands upright in. Madame, whatever you are, I tell you without hesitation that Ethel Arbuthnot is a queen."

Her ladyship indulged in a polite snigger.

"Some people have peculiar ideas," she replied. I am sorry I called. My acquaintance with this branch of the Arbuthnots was formed under a misapprehension. It ends here."

"Because we are poor," said Ethel.

"Put whatever construction you please on my actions and language, Miss Arbuthnot."

Ethel haughtily turned her back on her rude visitor, who got into her carriage, and without saying good-bye, was driven off.

"Ha! ha!" laughed Mr. Clews; "there is one of your fair-weather friends, I suppose you don't feel the loss much?"

"No, indeed," replied Ethel.

"It is very hard to bear after the position we have held," said Mrs. Arbuthnot.

"Mamma," answered Ethel, reprovingly, "I do think you are getting childish. Say farewell to Mr. Clews, who is our only friend, and get into the carriage."

Mrs. Arbuthnot suffered herself to be conducted to the carriage; but her tears fell fast, and she refused to be comforted.

"Good-bye, ma'am," said cheery Mr. Clews.

"Good-bye, my dear, if you'll allow an old man to call you so."

"Why, certainly, Mr. Clews," replied Ethel.

"You're in the right path, my dear. I'll back you, and remember that whenever you want me, you have only to write or telegraph to Bedford Row. Don't be in a hurry to marry. You'll get a good man yet. If I wasn't so old, I wouldn't mind; but there, it's no use talking; you could get anyone you liked."

Ethel blushed slightly. They shook hands; the carriage drove off, and she fell back on the cushions for the last time. Never again would she ride in that carriage. A feeling of sadness took possession of her as she was swept rapidly past the grand old trees, the lake, the deer, and the park, which she had called and fondly thought her own.

Fortune was treating her like a little child, to whom a toy is given to play with a little while, and then taken away. She had had a husband and an estate—where were they now? From this melancholy contemplation she turned to thoughts of Charles Palethorpe, from whom she had not heard for a long while. That some-

thing had happened to him she feared greatly, because he had been so punctual in writing.

"Ah! me," she sighed, "we cannot control our own destiny in the world, and I must live my life."

CHAPTER X.

HARD TIMES.

Enjoy short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed. —MILTON.

MORECAMBE, the town to which the Arbuthnots had retreated, was not in such a flourishing condition as Ethel had imagined. Several of the mills were running on short time, and employment was not at all plentiful.

Ethel and her mother procured apartments at a cheap rate in a respectable but inexpensive quarter, and having a little money in their possession, lived comfortably for a time. Mrs. Arbuthnot was not in good health; she felt the loss of Oak Hall, and giving way to melancholy, became morose and sullen. Her appetite failed her. She took little exercise, and her daughter became alarmed about her.

Ethel had carefully kept her address a secret from everybody, and lest anyone in the county should recognise her name, she took that of her mother before she was married, which was Harrison.

The woman in whose house she lived was named Brown, a widow, who was extremely selfish. This person treated them well, as long as they could pay their rent regularly, but when week after week passed, and a bill was owing, and Ethel could find no employment, she became disagreeable.

It was now December, and winter had set in with unwonted severity. Ethel had in vain answered advertisements. She would have accepted any work she could get. No one, however, wanted her. All the places were filled up before she got to them. Married ladies thought her too good-looking for a governess, and the shopkeepers imagined her too stylish. Mrs. Brown claimed two weeks' rent, for Mr. Clews' twenty pounds had soon gone, and Ethel was too proud to write for more.

"Not till I am reduced to the last extremity," she said to herself.

That last resource of the poor and needy, the pawnbroker's, had supplied her with money to buy the necessities of life, and now she had nothing left to pawn. It was with unbounded delight, therefore, that she read an advertisement for a saleswoman in the establishment of Messrs. Sarcenet, in the High Street. This was an imposing shop, which she had often remarked during her walks, and at nine o'clock in the morning she presented herself at the front door. It wasn't yet open, though the counter men were busily engaged in dressing the windows.

About fifty girls and women were standing outside, shivering in the cold and waiting eagerly for the doors to open. The young men amused themselves by looking at them through the windows, laughing and criticising their appearance. Their remarks were coarse and vulgar, and more than one girl turned away and left in disgust.

Poor Ethel thought she would have little chance with so many applicants, but she determined to wait. The luck might change at last. Her mother was confined to her bed with an attack of rheumatism. Mrs. Brown had refused them a scuttle of coals unless the money was paid, and there was nothing to eat in the house. Such was the disastrous condition of affairs. At length the doors were opened and the girls filed in, the manager of the business, whose name was Samms, standing at the entrance. He looked at the applicants, asked them some questions, and dismissed them with a curt "You won't do," until it came to Ethel's turn. Her modest demeanour and lady-like appearance seemed to impress him.

"What's your name?" he asked.

"Ethel Arbuthnot," she replied. "I—I

mean Miss Harrison," she added, correcting herself.

"Arbuthnot!" he repeated. "I've heard that name before somewhere. Oh, yes! the Arbuthnots of Oak Hall. What made you take that name?"

"I don't know, sir," said Ethel.

"Ever been in business before, Miss—what is it—Harrison?" continued the manager.

"No, sir."

"Then you know nothing about our trade?"

"Nothing. But if you will teach me, I will soon learn."

"Hem! You can't expect a very high rate of wages if you have no qualification."

"I will take what salary you like to give me, sir," answered Ethel, "if it is enough for me to live upon."

"You have a bedridden mother, I suppose, or a drunken husband to support. I am used to those stories," said Mr. Samms, leaning against the counter and looking very big.

"My mother is ill. I am not married, and if I were, I should not live with a drunken husband."

"Bravo!" he cried. "I like that. Now if I take you on, how much a week do you expect?"

"I really don't know, sir."

"Ah! You have never been out before. Well, how much can you live upon?"

"Fifteen shillings," replied Ethel.

It seemed very little after the luxury she had been accustomed to, but she had calculated every expense and found that she could keep her mother and herself on that small sum.

"It's a great deal of money," answered Mr. Samms, stroking his big, heavy, black moustache; "but I'll take you on trial. You other women can go."

The applicants glared at Ethel, and filed out again as they had come in. Poor things! They regarded her as a robber, for she had, as it were, taken the bread out of their mouths. The ex-heiress of Oak Hall was engaged at a salary of fifteen shillings a week as saleslady or shopgirl, as Mr. Samms called it, in the famous firm of Sarcenet and Company.

She was told to go to work at once, and did so, after depositing her hat and cloak in a side room. The other girls in the shop did not render her any assistance, and she had to study out everything for herself. Custom was not very brisk that morning, and she soon found where to look for different boxes and goods.

The day seemed very long, and she was quite tired with standing before the time for dinner arrived. This was served upstairs. Tea was also supplied on the premises, and at nine o'clock, weary and sleepy, she returned home. Her mother was much worse, and when Ethel entered the room with the good news that she had obtained employment, she did not evince any particular interest in the announcement.

"You don't appear glad, mamma," said Ethel, taking off her things.

"I am so cold and hungry," replied Mrs. Arbuthnot. "Nobody's been near me all day."

"Of course, I can't be here and in the shop too!" answered Ethel.

"Your place is near me; but I shan't want you long. I feel I'm going fast, and in a little while I shall not trouble anybody!"

"Don't say that, mamma!" exclaimed Ethel, with tears in her eyes. "You have me to care for you. I'll go and see Mrs. Brown, and we'll soon have things comfortable."

The landlady heard Ethel's account of how she had obtained work, and with the prospect of being paid before her avaricious eyes, she lent a little money and supplied the coals which were so much needed.

Ethel warmed the room and gave her mother some supper, which appeared to do her good. Yet at the same time she could not conceal from herself the fact that Mrs. Arbuthnot was seriously unwell. She did not suffer from any defined malady, but was sinking gradually, as if her heart was broken and she was giving way to despondency.

A fortnight passed, and Ethel got on very well, giving every satisfaction to her employer.

She remarked that the manager, Mr. Samms, was often in her part of the shop and gave her more instructions than he did any of the other girls. On a Saturday afternoon he leant over the counter and asked her how she would like to go to the theatre that evening.

"I could not think of it!" she replied, "for I have my mother to attend to, and, besides that, I couldn't go alone, sir."

"There is no reason why you should, my dear," said Mr. Samms, with a tender look, "I will go with you."

"You!" cried Ethel.

She was astonished at the declaration, for up to the present time, she had not dreamt that the manager admired her. Her resolution was taken in a moment. No matter what the consequence might be, she would indignantly reject advances which could only result in her dishonour. What would people say, if she was seen at the theatre with Mr. Samms?

"You seem rather surprised, Miss Harrison," said the manager, "at the offer I have made you. Let me tell you, that there is not one young lady in this shop who would not jump at it."

"By all means go to them," answered Ethel, coldly.

"Thank you. When I want advice I will ask for it."

Ethel continued her work, which at that moment consisted in sorting some French cambrics, a full supply of which had just come in.

"Am I to take your silence for your consent?" asked Mr. Samms, toying restlessly with a yard measure.

"No, sir, you are not. Leave me alone, I beg. If you are a gentleman, you will see that your offer has distressed and annoyed me. Shall I pain myself and you by speaking more plainly?" replied Ethel.

"Oh, no," he said, gnawing his nether lip savagely, "you have said quite enough. More than enough in fact, as you will discover before long."

"I cannot help it."

Mr. Samms walked away, white with passion, and Ethel was left to her thoughts, wondering whether he would forget her refusal or vent his spite upon her in some way. The girl at the counter next to her whispered:

"What was the manager saying to you?"

"He wanted me to go to the theatre with him to-night."

"Are you going?"

"Not I," answered Ethel. "I refused him distinctly, and as good as told him to go about his business."

"Oh! my," cried the girl, "you were foolish. He'll give you your discharge to-night, see if he doesn't. I knew another girl who was just as independent as you, and treated him in the same way, and she didn't stay an hour in the shop."

"I can't help it," replied Ethel, who felt sick at heart at the prospect of being sent away from her work.

She had faithfully promised Mrs. Brown some money that evening and what she should do, if she did not get it, she did not know. The morning had been heavy and over-cast, the afternoon saw the snow fall in thick, heavy flakes, which soon multiplied on the ground, forming a white mantle. The sky looked as if it was full of snow and had a large quantity to discharge, and as the evening wore on it was difficult to walk about.

Two o'clock came and the last purchase had been made, the girls dressed themselves to go home, thanking heaven that the next day was a day of rest, and presented themselves at the cashing desk for their money. When Ethel stood before the clerk, he said:

"Your services will not be required next week, Miss Harrison."

Ethel felt as if she should faint.

"What have I done to be discharged?" she asked, tremulously.

"Nothing that I am aware of," was the reply. "Trade is dull and we are reducing our hands."

She knew that this was false, for the Christmas trade was just beginning and they had put on half-a-dozen new girls that week.

"Give me my money, please," she continued.

"I am sorry to say that I have none for you," said the clerk.

"None!" gasped Ethel.

She could scarcely believe that the small sum of fifteen shillings could be an object of such importance to her. At that juncture, however, it was a fortune.

"The fact is, you were three minutes late on Monday, five two shillings, on Tuesday your takings were under a pound, five five shillings, this afternoon you were talking to the girl next to you, five half a sovereign, so you see you owe us money, but we'll have to write that off as a bad debt. Good evening, miss. Next young lady. Step up lively, please!"

Utterly crushed at this unexpected misfortune, the poor girl quitted the shop with bowed head and tottering limbs. Out into the fast falling snow, the cold wind blowing her shawl aside, and making her shiver, she went. "Oh, for the rarity of Christian charity," as the poet sang. Slowly she wended her way towards home, Home! what a mockery of the word. Knocking at the door she waited till Mrs. Brown came.

"Where's the money?" cried the latter, in a coarse voice.

"I have none. They discharged me and stopped my pay," replied Ethel.

"Then you can't come in here."

"Can't! oh, please let me see my mother."

"I sent her to the hospital this afternoon; be off," was the unfeeling answer.

"I cannot stay in the streets all night," cried Ethel, wildly, "you must let me in."

"Ha! ha! must!" laughed Mrs. Brown.

Ethel ran up the steps. Mrs. Brown seized her by the shoulders and pushed her backwards. She fell heavily on the snow and fainted, the flakes forming, as it were, a winding sheet over her body. Then the door banged to and she was alone in the deserted street.

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

ENGLISH SILK MILLS TO REMOVE TO NEW JERSEY.

THREE gentlemen prominently engaged in the manufacture of silk in Macclesfield, formerly the great centre of that industry in England, have been visiting the silk mills of Paterson, N.J. One of the gentlemen builds silk machinery, and hearing of the great prosperity of the Paterson mills, he thought he would find a market for his machinery in the city. He was surprised to learn that nearly all the machinery wanted is made in Paterson, one silk manufacturing company making all its own machinery on the premises. One of the other visitors is superintendent of a large silk mill in Macclesfield, and the other is the son of a great mill owner. Both of these gentlemen, after a tour of the Paterson mills, confessed that the American manufacturers had nothing to learn from their English rivals, but that the latter had much to learn from the former.

PROPOSED ENGLISH CHANNEL BRIDGE.

A RECENT project is the scheme for bridging the English Channel, put forth by M. Verard de Sainte Anne, France. He maintains that his bridge scheme is preferable to the tunnel scheme, because its execution would not cost more than 300,000,000 francs, whereas the tunnel could not be constructed for less than 500,000,000 francs. M. De Sainte Anne, moreover, affirms that his viaduct could be constructed in a much shorter space of time than the tunnel.

The proposed viaduct is to span the Channel from Cape Grisnez to Folkstone. According

to the Admiralty soundings the greatest depth of water to be found on the passage is fifty-five metres, and this is only for a distance of some four kilometres about half way between the Varne Rock and the French coast. This Varne Rock and its neighbour, the Calbart Reef, play an important part in the scheme. The former, situated at fifteen kilometres from Folkstone and twenty kilometres from Cape Grisnez, is some four kilometres broad, covered with no more than from two to fifteen metres of water. Being of solid rock, and in a direct line with the projected viaduct, it offers itself as a natural half-way resting place. This rock has, till now, constituted one of the greatest dangers to the navigation of the Channel.

M. de Sainte Anne proposes not only to turn it to account by using it as the foundation for a portion of the viaduct, but also, in conjunction with the Calbart Reef, for the construction of a free port in which vessels of the greatest tonnage will be able to seek shelter from the storms so frequent in the strait which separates England from France. Both for the construction of this port and for reducing the depth of the water to twenty metres in those places where he will be obliged to construct his columns, M. De Sainte Anne proposes to adopt the method employed in the construction of the Cherbourg breakwater, which consists in dropping huge masses of rocks into the sea, and in consolidating them by means of Roman cement.

On the foundations thus established it is intended to raise solid masses of masonry to some forty metres above the level of the sea. This is, of course, a gigantic work, the immensity of which will be seen at a glance, when it is remembered that M. De Sainte Anne does not contemplate attempting in his viaduct any span exceeding two hundred metres. The distance from Folkstone to Cape Grisnez being thirty-five kilometres, it will, therefore, be necessary to construct at the very least 175 immense blocks of masonry on which to place the superstructure. As to the superstructure itself he proposes to employ three systems. On the Varne Rock and at the two extremities where the water is shallow and the exigencies of navigation permit, he proposes to construct solid stone arches which will have nothing to fear from the fiercest tempest. This massive masonry is to be followed by the girder bridge system, such as employed in the Charing Cross railway bridge. But to span the deep water he has recourse to the tubular bridge system as applied by Sir Robert Stephenson in the erection of the Menai bridge.

With these three systems combined he believes that he is not only certain to succeed in crossing the Channel, but also in satisfying the demands of every government concerning the precautions to be taken to prevent the navigation of the English Channel being rendered even more dangerous than it is at present.

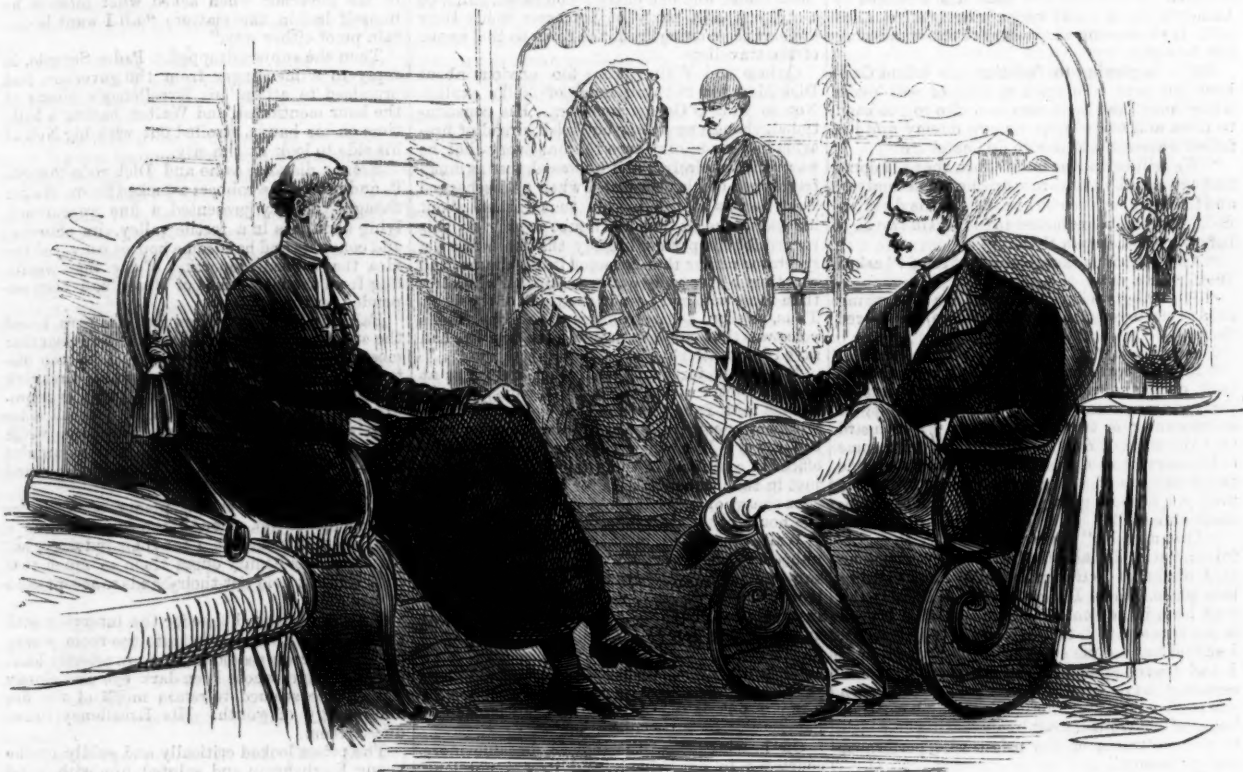
THE Brighton pantomime of 1879-80 is to be on a scale of hitherto unattempted completeness. The title will be "Sindbad the Sailor."

A NOVELTY in jewellery called the celluloid, a relative to the coral family, is the fashion, and daggers, pins, earrings, and darts are made of it.

THE New York "Herald" discharged an editor the other day who failed to commence an editorial; "As the 'Herald' predicted."

No Hottentot is permitted to marry more than eight sisters out of one family. This is right. Somebody else might want a chance.

PAUL proposes to his young wife to take a little jaunt in Switzerland. "What is there in Switzerland?" asks the ingenious fair. "What is there in Switzerland?" echoes her young husband; "why there is the most wonderful scenery in the world—lofty mountain peaks tipped with rosy snow, and verdurous vales and sleeping lakes, and—" "Oh, shoot thy sleeping lakes (Oh fais fustiler tes lacs dormants)—take me somewhere where there are shops to buy things at!"



[A DELICATE INQUIRY.]

THE COST OF CORA'S LOVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Clytie Cranbourne," "The Golden Bowl."

"Poor Loo," "Bound to the Trawl."

"Fringed with Fire," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

Then on our foes a sudden terror fell,
And they fled, scattering.

"WELL, old man, how do you feel now?"

The speaker is Walter Smith, and he is bending over his cousin, Dick Marsden, who has been sent very near to "the shadowy land" by a bullet from the pistol of a would-be robber. Would-be, I say, for he was the poorer by an ounce of lead, from his encounter with the Englishmen.

Six months have passed since our two friends left Peru, and they are still in Mexico. They had no intention of remaining so long in this turbulent country when they left Lima, but many causes had conspired to keep them here.

First of all, Dick Marsden had really been entrusted by his father with business for the firm. This business had taken them to the city of Mexico, where they had remained a couple of months. Then they had wandered from one point of interest to another, not without a purpose or motive, it is true, but without any very pressing idea of the value of time, for it must be remembered that Walter was under the impression that years lay between the present and the time when he could go back to England and claim Cora for his wife, and as for Dick, time never passed so pleasantly as when in the

society of his cousin, and he was in no hurry whatever to get back to Lima.

Thus week after week drifted on and the two Englishmen travelled about the unquiet country, business rather than pleasure directing their footsteps, but not occupying their thoughts exclusively.

Walter never lost sight of the purpose which brought him to Mexico, but though he spared neither trouble nor money in the search, he had not been able to discover the priest who, according to Juanita's account, had married her to Launcelot Latimer.

The marriage had taken place at the city of Zacatecas, the capital of the province of the same name, where the girl's father had been the possessor of a small estate. But it was not merely to prove that the form of marriage had been gone through, that Walter was sent to Mexico, for that was easily done, his instructions were to discover the priest that had performed the ceremony, and obtain his deposition, properly reduced to writing and attested, as to what statement Latimer had made with regard to himself and his religious belief at the time of the marriage, since, if he had declared himself to be a Roman Catholic the marriage would be perfectly legal and binding according to the law of the country in which it took place, and would therefore be recognised as valid in England.

This was the flaw that Latimer relied upon; if the priest had known that he was a protestant the marriage would have been null and void according to Mexican law, and would therefore stand but a poor chance of recognition in England. Latimer declared that this was the case, Juanita strenuously denied it, therefore the priest must be found, but how?

He had left Zacatecas a week or two after this marriage had been celebrated, so much Juanita knew, she believed he had gone to the city of Mexico to remain for a time, but more definite information she could not give except the name of Bishop Stroyer, who knew her family and might be able to trace the priest.

Juanita's father was dead, her nearest relative was an uncle who had been greatly incensed at her marriage with an Englishman, since he had intended her for his own son, and so little help did she expect to get from him that she did not even allude to him in the notes which at the rector's suggestion she had written down for Walter's guidance; unfortunately she urged him not to lose time in going to Zacatecas itself, for there was no dispute about the ceremony having been performed; all that was wanted was the evidence of the man who had celebrated it, as to what was Latimer's religious faith at the time.

The search for the priest in the city of Mexico and elsewhere, however, had been vain. Bishop Stroyer had died the previous winter, and but for the merest accident, Walter would long since have given up all hope of finding the man he was looking for, and would have returned to Peru.

This accident was the miscarriage of a letter which Fleming Cadbury had written, but that by some lucky mischance was lost on the way and never reached our hero's hands. In it, the rector had told him to relinquish his search, since he had every reason to believe that the woman who was to have benefited by it was dead.

It was written in one of Fleming Cadbury's desponding moods, moods that had become very frequent with him since the disappearance of the woman he loved and the calamity that had befallen his friend, the marquis, and had Walter read it he would have been sorely tempted to throw up everything else and return at once to England.

But it was lost, as was also a letter from Cora and another from his mother, in which the last new trouble which had visited the girl he loved, in the form of a vulgar woman who laid claim to her, was much more fully dwelt upon than previously, and his immediate return urged by those two who were most dear to him.

Thus it was, that while he knew the Marquis of Lamorna was seriously if not fatally injured,

he did not know that his own presence was required in England, or that the changes at Lamorna Castle could very seriously affect himself. He is getting very weary of this wandering life, however.

He is beginning to feel that his friend Cadbury has sent him upon a kind of will-o-the-whisp hunt, and he is anxious also to get back to Lima and to confront his own enemy and his father's assassin, Roderigo de Castellano.

"We will make one more effort, then if I don't find my man I shall throw up the whole matter, and Cadbury must come himself if he is dissatisfied," Walter had remarked to his cousin two days before we came upon them.

"And what is the supreme effort to be?" asked Dick, with a yawn.

"We will go to Zacatecas, and see if anything about this mysterious priest can be discovered there."

Dick made a wry face.

"No joke covering such a distance on horseback, or in the villainous carriages one gets in this country, to say nothing of the certainty of an encounter or two with robbers. I've heard that the state of Zacatecas is infested with some of the biggest rascals unhung, and that people think no more of being robbed on leaving the town you propose going to than they do of eating their dinner."

"That may be," answered Walter, thoughtfully; "still, I shall not feel that I have done all I ought to do if I go away without visiting this place, when I have failed in finding the man I am in search of elsewhere. Had I been here alone and left to follow my own judgment, I should have gone straight to Zacatecas, or if I had travelled to the capital first, I should certainly have gone from there to the town where the marriage actually took place, that being of course the most likely locality in which to pick up traces of the priest who performed the ceremony."

"Very well, go where you like, I'll follow," growled Dick, resignedly; "but I am beginning to long for the 'flesh-pots of Egypt,' in other words, to get back to the household presided over by my step-mother, for not the least of Donna Lola's virtues is, that she can provide a dinner fit for a civilised being to sit down to."

Walter laughed and made some jesting remark about Dick's heart and his stomach, then orders were given for the proposed journey, and so little time was lost that two days later they were riding within half a mile of Zacatecas. There the two Englishmen and their servants, accompanied by big Nell, and led by two guides, were suddenly beset by a band of mounted robbers, who in some mysterious way seemed to have sprung from the very earth, so utterly without any kind of warning had they appeared.

To suppose that Englishmen would submit to be robbed without a stout resistance would be for the assailants to reckon without their host, and, if they had formed any expectations of that kind they were speedily undeceived, for no sooner were their intentions perceived than the travellers drew up together and prepared to defend themselves. Shots were freely exchanged, the leader of the attacking party was killed, others were more or less wounded, and our own friends did not go unscathed, for a bullet had lodged in Dick Marsden's shoulder, and our hero himself had had a very narrow escape with his life.

It was big Nell who saved him. The fight was at its hottest. The leader of the robbers lay dead, Dick was wounded, knives were taking the place of pistols in the hands of the bandits, and one big desperado was creeping stealthily up behind Walter as he turned to assist his cousin. One second more, and Cora's lover would never return to her. A mother would be made childless and would carry the conviction with her to her grave, that a girl's love had cost her only son his life.

But that one moment was enough, for the huge mastiff, Cora's parting gift, no sooner saw the intention of the cowardly villain, than without bark or growl, she sprang with a single bound at his throat and bore him to the ground. A bullet from Quinto finished Nell's work, and

the rest of the band, disheartened at the loss of their leader and one of their comrades, galloped away just as a party of horsemen made their appearance coming from the town to the rescue of the travellers.

Quinto and Walter were too anxious about Dick Marsden to think much of Nell's exploit. Not so Tim O'Grady, however. His constitutional, though anything but Irish, dread of firearms had made him sure that at every shot he was "kilt intirely," and he was almost as much frightened at his own pistol when he discharged it, as he was at the bullets that rattled about his ears, and it was no doubt owing to this regard for his personal safety that he became a spectator rather than an actor in the drama, and was thus better able to appreciate Nell's heroism than those who had been in the thick of the fight. Thus, as soon as the robbers were gone, Tim's voice was the loudest in praising the dog who had saved her master's life.

But it was fortunate that other help was at hand. Dick's wound might be serious, already he was faint from loss of blood, so a rude litter was hastily constructed and he was carried into the town. But when they arrived there the officer in command of the soldiers who had come just in time to be too late for the fray, insisted that the whole party should be taken at once to the house of the governor.

Walter protested, but his expostulations were unheeded, they were foreigners, two Mexican subjects had been slain by them, and even though it was in self defence, his Excellency must be instantly informed of what had occurred as well as the object the Englishmen had in visiting Zacatecas.

"It's all right, Walter," Dick managed to say faintly, "I've a letter of introduction to him; I got it the day you decided to come here."

On hearing this, the officer became more courteous to our friends, and it was not long after that they reached the governor's residence and the state of the case was explained to him.

A letter of introduction from an influential friend goes a long way even in such a lawless country as Mexico, and no sooner had the governor read the credentials with which Dick had provided himself than he became most cordial and hospitable, insisted that the Englishmen should be his guests, and sent for his own surgeon to attend to Dick and if possible extract the bullet.

It was an anxious half hour for Walter. What should he say to his uncle if he had to return to him without his son? who could ever replace the dear friend and comrade whom he had grown to love as a brother? A thousand anxious thoughts like these passed through his mind, but they were driven away at last. Dick would recover, the bullet had been extracted, the wound was trifling, he must be kept quiet for a short time, and then he would be as well as ever.

"And now," said the governor, when Dick had fallen asleep and been left in charge of Quinto, "how can I further your wishes? You had a motive for coming to Zacatecas, no doubt."

This was in Spanish, but our hero had become quite familiar with the language by this time. A little despondently Walter replied by frankly telling him the purpose which brought him to Mexico and more particularly to Zacatecas.

"If anyone can help me now it is your Excellency," he concluded by saying.

"Of course I can, Segura was an old friend of mine; I knew Donna Juanita and her whole family well, and Padre Serapio is again living in this city. I will send for him this very evening and you will then certainly learn all he can tell you."

Walter expressed his thanks warmly. When he understood that the man he had been looking for was found at last, it seemed as though a load of anxiety and care were lifted from his mind. Dick with careful nursing would soon be out of danger, and the question of the legality of Juanita's marriage would be decided as far as he had any interest in it.

"To me, personally, it is exactly the same whether the marriage is legally binding or

utterly void," he had replied, truly enough, to the governor when asked what interest he himself had in the matter; "all I want is certain proof either way."

Then the subject dropped. Padre Serapio, in reply to a messenger from the governor, had promised to attend his Excellency's guests at the hour mentioned, and Walter, having a little time on his hands, strolled out with big Nell at his side to look at the city.

From a distance as he and Dick rode towards it, and before the robbers attacked them, Walter thought the city presented a fine appearance, lying as it does in a fertile valley, its churches and convents and handsome houses conveyed the idea that a good proportion of the vast wealth dug from the rich mines of silver had been expended on the spot.

Fairly in the town, however, our hero found the streets narrow and dirty, and it was clear that most of its stately beauty was due to the distance which lends enchantment to the first view of many a squalid city, though nature, ever prolific in these climes, had clothed the hill sides with rich verdure and glorious flowers, while elevated peaks and views of distant mountains helped to make the scene both strange and fascinating.

There was plenty to see, plenty of work for the people to do, though the Mexicans, as a race, are not remarkable for their industry, but nature in her bounty offers them so much that they can but hold out their hands to accept some of her gifts.

Returning in good time for the interview with the priest, Walter was led into the room where the governor was seated talking to a priestly-looking personage, whose keen dark eye and closely shaven face seemed to retain much of the fire and energy of youth. His Excellency introduced them.

The priest looked critically and coldly at the young Englishman and saluted him with frigid courtesy. He looked upon Walter with no friendly glance, for he was a heretic and a foreigner, and from what the governor had told him about Juanita, he was much more inclined to distrust our hero than to place any confidence in him.

Had his own feelings only been in question, Walter would no doubt have felt somewhat irritated at the priest's suspicious, haughty bearing, but now he was too eager to get this business finished, and too anxious about his cousin Dick, to attach any great importance to the Mexican priest's demeanour, so, after the first words necessitated by courtesy, he briefly stated his object in coming to Zacatecas and troubling the Padre to grant him this interview.

"You bring me a letter I suppose from Donna Juanita?"

"Certainly; I should have presented it before," and the young man opened a pocket-book, and taking from it a sealed letter, handed it to the priest.

The reverend father's countenance and manner underwent an entire change as he read what was written, and Walter could not help noticing what a fine face it was and how much latent power and resolution was expressed in it.

"Pardon me if I have doubted you, señor," he said as he slowly folded up the paper; "but Donna Juanita is beautiful and young, and I thought you might know her; she writes that you do not, but that you are the friend of a man who has promised that she shall have justice done to her."

"It is true; I never spoke to the lady in my life," was the reply; "but will you furnish me with proof that this girl was legally married or not?"

"Certainly; but who denies it? There is other testimony besides mine."

"The more the better; but the matter as I apprehend it depends on this point: Did Mr. Latimer profess to be a Roman Catholic and conform in all respects to the requirements of the Roman Catholic church when he married the daughter of Señor Segura? That alone I believe would make the marriage valid according to the law of Mexico."

"But he was a Catholic, senior," said the priest, emphatically.

Walter shrugged his shoulders slightly as he said:

"That is exactly what he now says he was not; at least, so I am informed; my personal knowledge of Mr. Latimer is slight in the extreme."

"He professed to be a member of the true church, he was recognised as such by me and by his wife's family. He wrote me a letter before I consented to marry him to the daughter of my friend, stating that he was not only a Catholic himself, but of Catholic parentage. I have the letter in my possession now. You shall have it, or a copy of it before you go."

"Then there can be no doubt that the marriage was legal and binding according to the law of Mexico, of which country this lady was a native?" asked Walter.

"Yes, did you doubt it?" suspiciously; "do you wish to prove that it was invalid?"

"I have no wish on the subject," was the slightly indignant reply, "though I should think it will be highly satisfactory to the lady to know that she was legally married. And as I told his Excellency, I have no personal interest in the matter; if you still doubt me you can send the letter of which you speak, or any other proof you may deem necessary, to some responsible person in England; provided it reaches the hands of the senora my friend will know that I have carried out his wishes, and I shall be content."

"You are hasty, my son," in a mildly satirical tone; "the word of his Excellency," turning to the governor, "should be guarantee sufficient for you. I will commit a full account of the marriage to writing, and you shall have what independent testimony I may possess."

"Thanks, then my stay in this place will be but short."

"When do you leave?"

"As soon as my cousin is sufficiently recovered to travel."

"It is well. Come to me two days hence and the papers shall be ready."

Thus it happened that a week after their arrival in Zacatecas the two Englishmen, accompanied by their servants and big Nell, took their departure from the city. An escort for some distance was provided by the courteous governor, but, though they had no further adventures with robbers, the journey down to the coast was necessarily a slow one, for Dick Marsden was still a good way from complete recovery, and though their last letters from Lima had made him and Walter very anxious to get back to the City of the Kings, the intense heat, the difficulties of travelling and the consequent prostration and fatigue, forbade anything like feverish haste.

They have no time to lose, however, revolution is ripe in the Peruvian capital, the train of gunpowder is laid, and many a man like Eoderigo de Castellaro stands ready, with lighted torch in hand, to fire it.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

IN THE WITNESS BOX.

"Do you persist in your denial?"

"I ask you, are you innocent or guilty?"

"Speak truth, and the whole truth."

The state of Lance Latimer's mind on the night of Sponsons' arrest, was by no means enviable. His first sensation after the shock of seeing the dreaded cane in the hands of his valet was one of relief to think it was out of his own room, out of the castle, and found in other hands than his.

The instinct of self-preservation made him deny all knowledge of the cane which the groom swore, with such irritating pertinacity, was the identical one which had been taken by Lord Lamorna on the day of the outrage, and his next cowardly impulse was to desert Sponsons at this juncture, and to even affect to believe it possible that he had really been the perpetrator of the assault.

A moment's reflection, however, showed him that he would expose himself to a double danger if he did this, for, first of all he would incur Sponsons' hatred and lay himself open to all the injury this man could do him, and that would not be little, and furthermore, he would not by these means shift the burden of possible suspicion from himself, since, on the mere possession of the stick, unsupported by other evidence, no jury would convict a man of so serious a crime, while no doubt, Sponsons would be able to produce witnesses to prove that he was far away from Lamorna on the very afternoon that the crime was committed. No, he must not desert Sponsons. He must make the man's cause his own and stick to him without flinching.

There were a few drawbacks to this course of action, not the least being that Sponsons' antecedents, which the police were sure to hunt up, were not altogether reputable, and it would, moreover, be almost certain to transpire that his own connection with the man was anything but creditable.

Still, this course presented the fewer evils of the two and he determined to follow it. Perilous to his safety and position as was this affair of Sponsons being found in possession of the missing cane that the marquis had carried on that memorable February afternoon, it was not the matter that troubled Latimer most.

The question as to what had become of Juanita haunted him day and night. This terror was quite of recent date. He had expected all along that her body would have been found in the river, and that from the strange way in which she had conducted herself in assuming the garb of a gipsy at the rector's garden party, and her passionate assertions regarding himself, a jury would return a verdict of "Suicide while in a state of unsound mind."

In this, however, he had been disappointed; no news of the body of a woman having been found in the Wreydon reached him, and though he eagerly searched all the county and local newspapers, and hunted the columns of the "Times," and most of the London daily papers, still not a single reference could be discovered as to the finding of a body which would give him any certain knowledge as to the fate of his wife.

"Was she alive? Had she also escaped him?" These were the questions that pressed upon his brain and that drove sleep from his eyelids.

Had he failed in killing her as he had failed in killing the marquis? Surely not! And yet, he had left both of them for dead, and one at least had lived to be a constant reproach, a constant source of terror to him.

He had not wanted to kill the marquis, but now he wished most earnestly that the grand old man was dead.

But he had meant to kill Juanita, and if he had failed in carrying out his intention, he felt no doubt whatever but that, sooner or later, she would accomplish his ruin.

"I was an idiot to marry her," he would say to himself, bitterly, a hundred times a day, "a still greater idiot to repudiate such a woman; but it is useless to regret the past. If I could live my life over again, I would act otherwise, but bah! every idiot thinks that; I must act in the present, not waste my time in regretting what is irrevocable. I must find out what has become of this woman; if she is alive and I could get her into a lunatic asylum under an assumed name, then I might perhaps be safe."

It was with the object of making veiled and cautious inquiries about Juanita that he had come to Wreydonford on the morning of the day on which Sponsons was arrested. The river on which this town became crowded with craft of every size, and any large substance like a human body could not fail to be noticed.

He learned nothing, however. He could not ask a straightforward leading question on the point for fear of exciting suspicion, particularly as he knew that the emissaries of Fleming Cadbury were on his trail, and even had he been less guarded in his search he would have been none the wiser, for no body had been found float-

ing here for many months past, and the last was that of a boy who had accidentally fallen into the Wreydon when no one was at hand to save him. So he was about to drive back to Lamorna when Sponsons' unwelcome admiration attracted the attention of the groom and produced a new complication.

It was late when he arrived at the castle with the objectionable groom behind him. The moon was shining brightly, the horse was not only spirited but nervous, it started, shied, and more than once attempted to run away, and had not Latimer known well how to hold the reins, the animal would have been too much for him.

All his strength and skill were put to the test, however; he could not have conversed with the groom even had he wished to do so, and that worthy, having no good feeling towards this white-faced, lank-haired gentleman, declared his opinion in the servants' hall that Mr. Latimer did his best to upset him, and added, that for his part he believed Sponsons and his master were "a pair on 'em."

The women servants, however, declined to believe anything against their last favourite, and as one rosy-cheeked maid remarked:

"If Mr. Sponsons had know'd anything about the cane he wouldn't a' been sich an idiot as to carry it about in broad daylight."

Meanwhile the news had reached Lady Bellinda from two sources. Tom Jebb, the groom, had asked to be allowed to speak to her immediately upon his return. Then, he had given his version of the matter, and before he had quite finished, a note was brought to her ladyship from Mr. Latimer, containing a very brief statement of what had occurred that afternoon, and asking what steps she wished him to take in the matter. The grim old woman smiled bitterly when she read this hastily written epistle; then she crushed it in her hand and thrust it into her pocket.

"My compliments to Mr. Latimer and he will act as he thinks best," was the verbal reply she sent by a servant.

Then late as it was she telegraphed to the family solicitors, apprising them of Sponsons' arrest, and requesting them to attend the examination of the prisoner at Wreydonford the next day, and, when it was over, come on to the castle.

For a new suspicion had entered Lady Bellinda's mind. Hitherto, much as she disliked Latimer, she had never connected her brother's present condition with the idea that he could even remotely have been the cause of it. Sponsons' arrest opened up a fresh train of ideas, and improbable as it appeared, she began to think it possible that the master had hired the man to commit the dastardly outrage.

Lord Lamorna's condition had changed but little. His bodily health might be better, but the cloud still hung over his mind, he recognised no one; memory had left him, and even the power of speech was scarcely under his control. Cora was still at Spanker Hall, and Mr. Cadbury was in London when Sponsons' arrest took place.

With an energy peculiar to herself Lady Bellinda had driven over to Wreydonford the next morning before the magistrates had taken their seats on the bench. She was accompanied by Miss Ladbroke and the servant who had assisted Lord Lamorna to pull on his overcoat that February afternoon and had watched him select the cane which had next been seen in Sponsons' hands.

It was evident to all who saw the stern old woman that she was firmly resolved to bring all the machinery of the law to bear upon this man who was under suspicion of having nearly killed her brother, and when the prisoner as he was brought before the bench encountered her glance he felt for the first time that his position was really a serious one.

He was sober enough now, very pale too, and there was a certain air and manner about him that spoke rather of the reduced or dissipated gentleman than of either the insolence or sleek submission that so often distinguishes a "gentleman's gentleman."

The sight of Lady Bellinda's face produced a

kind of shock upon him, and the conviction rushed upon his mind that nothing but the truth and the whole truth, as far as he knew it, could save him. And he resolved, at all cost to others, to tell the truth.

Latimer had seen him earlier this morning, had again denied all knowledge of the cane being in the wardrobe, but had suggested that if it was the same that the marquis had carried, one of the servants in the castle had hidden it where Sponsons had found it. He particularly cautioned the man to say nothing about his past life, but to say he had been the servant of a gentleman who had gone to China, whom Mr. Latimer had known, and from whose service he had come direct to his present master.

Sponsons had listened and had promised to follow the instructions, for Latimer's plan seemed feasible, and as yet, the matter seemed to the prisoner to be but of trifling importance. True, he has been searched, and the money found upon him has added to the suspicion that there was something wrong about his antecedents, still, a ready excuse was invented to account for the possession of the hundred pounds by the assertion that he had received it for his master and had not had an opportunity of giving it to him. This brilliant suggestion came from Latimer, and it was with some reluctance that Sponsons promised to adopt it.

But now, all this fabric of lies and deceit must go. An unerring instinct, one that when he followed it never led him wrong, told the man that a felon's life lay before him if in any way he wavered from the truth. If he told the truth to begin with they must ultimately believe him, because if he set up no false pretences about the past, he could bring forward indisputable evidence that he was far enough away from Lamorna castle on the day when the marquis was attacked, to make it utterly impossible that he could have been the culprit.

And beneath all this, pressing its way up through the sense of shame that his present position inspired, was the pride and consciousness that he had been born a gentleman, had received the education of one, and that, although for a purpose he had accepted the position of a servant, he had never really been one.

Latimer saw the start of terror as Sponsons looked at Lady Bellinda, the flush that succeeded it, then the almost involuntary action of dignity and pride with which the man became erect, raised his head and threw back his shoulders as though preparing manfully to meet some hidden foe.

"The idiot is forgetting his part," thought Latimer, with an inaudible groan.

He was mistaken, Sponsons had decided that he had no part to play.

The preliminaries seemed to the prisoner to occupy a great deal of time. The magistrates talked to each other, there was much whispering and much rustling of papers, and even when the actual hearing of the charge began, more time than was needful seemed to the anxious man in the dock to be wasted in eliciting evidence about matters which nobody disputed the truth of. Then the accused, after being cautioned, was asked whether he had anything to say to the charge.

In a clear tone and with the accent of an educated man he repeated his former story. He had taken the cane from the wardrobe in Mr. Latimer's room in Lamorna Castle. He had never seen that gentleman carry it, but he knew it must have been there for some time, for it was in a part of the wardrobe which was generally locked, and he had noticed it the first time he had been able to find the key and obtain access to that wing of the wardrobe.

"As for my having had any part in the assault upon the Marquis of Lamorna," he went on, "I can prove that it was impossible. I spent the afternoon and evening of February the ninth in Bow Street police cells. I was discharged the next morning, there being no evidence against me."

At this point Sir Augustus Beverley, who sat on the bench, spoke to the chairman, who said:

"We shall remand you for three days in order

that inquiries may be made as to the truth of your statement." And turning to his brother magistrates he observed with a smile, "It would be hard to set up an alibi more easily proved or disproved than that."

Then Sponsons was led away, and in the three days that followed Latimer made no effort to see him or to communicate with him.

Lady Bellinda's eagerness to discover the author of the brutal outrage upon her brother would have induced her to find some means of talking to Sponsons and ascertaining who he really was, for her quick ear and keen perception had told her that he was not what he appeared to be, but Mr. Graham, her lawyer, dissuaded her.

"Wait till we know whether he has told the truth or not," the man of law had urged, and for once her ladyship listened to what other people called reason.

Three days later Sponsons again stood in the dock. The first witness called was an officer from Bow Street, who deposed that he had known the prisoner for years. He had originally been in a very good position in life, but had fallen into bad company and had become so reduced that for the last three years he had been a billiard marker in a notorious house near the Haymarket. With regard to his statement concerning his whereabouts on the ninth of February, it was strictly true. He had been arrested a few minutes after four o'clock that afternoon with two other men on the charge of being concerned in robbing a gentleman, he was kept in the cells that night, was discharged by the magistrate the next morning, and had not been seen in London since that date. On being cross-examined by Mr. Graham the witness said:

"I have no doubt whatever as to the identity of the prisoner in the dock with the man I arrested on the ninth of February. He was mixed up in some questionable business once with Mr. Latimer, and I had to make it my business to inquire into his antecedents, and I found that his father was a Lieutenant-Colonel in the army, that this man was at one time at the same school with Mr. Latimer, that for a short time he himself held a commission in the army, but he sold out, dissipated his property, and has sunk step by step till he has become the servant of his former companion and friend."

There was a sensation in court as this statement was made, and it was still further increased when the officer left the box and Lance Latimer stepped into his place. The face of the kinsman of the Lysters was very pale, but there was no apparent nervousness about him. He knew that it was more than probable that he and the prisoner would be ordered to change places, but he determined to fight to the last and to show no sign of fear or of flinching. His evidence was very brief, for he also decided that it would be wisest to speak the truth.

In the fewest possible words he confirmed the policeman's statement with regard to his early knowledge of Sponsons, and added, that meeting him poor and destitute, and not knowing how to help him otherwise, he had engaged him to wait upon himself, treating him as a humble friend rather than as a servant.

When questioned about the cane he declared that he never saw it in his life before, and swore positively that he had always understood the servants to refer to quite another stick until the one in question was identified by the groom.

He had no reason for disbelieving Sponsons' statement as to where he had found it, though he had never seen it there himself; every servant in the castle had access to the room, and anyone might have placed it where the prisoner asserted he had found it. For his own part he repeated again and again that he had never seen the cane before he saw it in the hands of the prisoner.

At this point he was told he could leave the witness box. And as he stepped down he noticed that Lady Bellinda and her lawyer were consulting together, also that the magistrates seemed to be divided in opinion upon some sub-

ject, and that Sir Augustus Beverley was more emphatic and excited than was usual to him. Instinctively he felt that they were discussing whether or not he should leave the court a free man or a prisoner.

(To be Continued.)

THOSE WHO "GROAN AND BEAR," AND THOSE THAT "GRIN AND BEAR."

AN individual of the first class never mentions the existence of his ailment, but those around him are cognisant of it from his gloomy mien, smothered ejaculations of pain, and martyr-like expression. If he is said to be looking well he is affronted—if ill, he is insulted. If he can be induced to say what ails him, it is generally found that he has the worst type of the most disagreeable ailment that has ever existed; at the same time he declares remedies to be useless alludes to doctors as quacks and humbugs; asserts his illness "will pass off" without aid of "nostrums," "as other people's would if nature were allowed to take its course." He accordingly lets nature do as it will, and not infrequently it takes its course to the grave. Or he may be forced to "lie by," to become a patient, and when that occurs his nurses are to be pitied. An irritable patient is bad, a nervous one is worse, but a sullen sufferer is of all the worst to deal with; one who, by not allowing himself to be ill, prevents himself from becoming well.

Invalids of the second class do not croak, but they quack. They try all kinds of advertised specifics, for ailments which they say are a "mere nothing," or sometimes declare to be non-existent. They are generally lively and sanguine, and have a horror of illness and the gloom which sometimes accompanies it, which makes them loth to distress others and depress themselves by acknowledging their true state of health. They appear to think that to ignore an illness is to remove it; and their lives are spent in attempting to conceal their ailments from others. Probably invalids of this class resort more to the use of opiates than those of any other, not so much because of a fear of pain as because they are afraid of pity. After years (perhaps) this sham health and artificial gaiety break down, ailments develop into disease, and the end comes very unexpectedly to those around them, who have known nothing of the warnings, which have been repeatedly felt, and as often ignored.

And the mourners have the additional sorrow of knowing that their affection has been cheated of its saddest but most cherished rite, that of lavishing care and tenderness on the acknowledged invalid of the family; that they have never had a chance of showing the full extent of their attachment to the one who has gone from their midst.

CHILDREN-KISSING.

EVERYBODY is expected to kiss the baby. The timid little girl who shrinks from the proffered osculation is ordered by her parents to kiss the visitor. The visitor has a slight or severe sore throat. The diphtheric germs are conveyed to the lips of the reluctant child, and final lodgment in the throat. A violent attack of diphtheria results and spreads through the family, usually by the same direct infection. The heart-broken mother bows her head to the inscrutable dispensations of Providence, and wonders why her darling should be taken, her darling, whom she had kept at home safely guarded against all exposure. The doctor talks learnedly about sewer gas, and bad weather—and these may be the vehicle, but never the origin, of the contagion—but the fatal disease was imparted through the lips of that thoughtless visitor. Many wise mothers will not permit strangers or friends to kiss their children. Their example should be followed. Under the

motto, "God Bless Our Home," should be suspended another, "Don't Kiss Our Children." If indiscriminate kissing were only nasty, it might be tolerated, but as it may be, and often is, deadly, it should be abolished.

HOW THE DREAD OF SEA-BATHING IS PRODUCED.

It is pitiable to see little children "dipped" by remorseless bathing women at the frequented watering-places. Parents do not consider how great is the present risk to which they expose their little ones by this practice, and how serious is the disability for future enjoyment they entail on children so treated. Many an adult who now dreads the act of submersion, and is deprived of the pleasure of the sea-bath, has to thank the conventional custom of "dipping" for the inconvenience under which he labours. It is easy to affirm that prejudices of this description should be surmounted by an effort of the will, but only those who are the subject of some fear or sensation which was created in infancy, and has persisted ever since, can form an adequate notion of the strength of "prejudice" so impressed.

It is far better to coax a child to paddle in the water than to compel or even coerce him to dip. If the head must be wetted, this should be accomplished by a sponge, not used as a shower-bath, so as to "take away the breath," but simply by way of washing. No possible harm can result from paddling, and it is well to begin in shallow and calm water, leading the child, or allowing it to find its way into a greater depth, gradually and playfully. The excitement caused by immersion is injurious at the time, and the aversion to bathing which it occasions is apt to prove seriously inconvenient in the future. The rough treatment experienced at the hands of a hideous and brusque bathing-woman has prevented many a boy from learning to swim.—Ed.]

A GOOD MOTHER-IN-LAW.

WHY do married men, as a race, dislike their mothers-in-law. The mother-in-law is not responsible for her position—probably does not admire it. Yet she has been the subject of countless stories, myriads of offensive jests, and quantities of sarcastic rhymes. Into all of these has entered an element of bitterness which does not appear in the gibes that are hurled at the widow and spinster. Malice is the inspiration of the assault upon the mother-in-law. Perhaps it is savagery born of a sense of detected guilt—guilt which has been hidden from the too confiding wife, but detected promptly by the penetrating eye of the mother-in-law. She is not blinded by love for the man, and to perfect clearness of vision she adds an experience which is as useful as second-sight in enabling her to see to the bottom of things.

To be sure there are diversities of mothers-in-law; and it does happen sometimes that a worthy and well-conducted man finds himself subjected to a mother-in-law who is a real affliction. All the saints have been made perfect through suffering. The thorn in the flesh sometimes points the way to celestial joys. A terrific mother-in-law may be good for discipline. She should be regarded very much as an ascetic regards a hair-cloth shirt. But a good mother-in-law is a very different person. She is really a well-spring of pleasure to a properly conducted husband. She is assiduous in taking care of the baby, and the serviceableness of her knowledge concerning the most effective methods of carrying the infant through critical periods, the efficiency with which she dispenses paregoric, measures out ipecac, and compounds plasters, fill the minds of just men with sentiments of admiration and thankfulness.

Give the mother-in-law her due.—Ed.]

MERRY OBSEQUIES.

THE majority of people rightly consider funerals very gloomy occasions; but some persons seem determined to make merry after they are dead, or at least afford their survivors the means of doing so. One old man left a bouquet to a city parish on condition that the church bells should ring a merry peal once a year; but there was a dark side to this picture, for the peal was to be rung on the anniversary of his wife's death, whereas a tolling was to mark the anniversary of his wedding day. An advocate of Padua in the sixteenth century directed that none of his relatives should shed tears at his funeral; singers and musicians should be engaged to supply the place of mourners; fifty of them were to walk with the priest before the coffin, each receiving half a ducat as a fee; twelve maidens in green habits were to carry the coffin to the church, singing cheerful songs as they went; the monks were not to wear black hoods.

A Frenchman who died about half a century ago had some time before left instructions concerning the mode in which his obsequies were to be observed. All the musicians of the town were to be invited to attend, and play dancing and hunting tunes during the procession; his house and the church were to be decorated in the liveliest way possible; and (but this must have been a very difficult point to settle) his property was to go to the relative who laughed the most joyously on the occasion.

CLARICE VILLIERS;

OR,

WHAT LOVE FEARED.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

IN GOD'S ACRE.

I wait thee—I adjure thee! Hast thou known
How I have loved thee? Couldst thou dream

Am I not here with night and death alone,
And fearing not? And hath my spirit's call
O'er thine no away? HEMANS.

THE impression which his meeting with Mrs. Dorton made upon the mind of Captain Bertram Pleydell was profound. Before that the suspicions which insensibly almost to himself had arisen in his soul were baseless phantasies, perhaps sorely wronging an innocent man. Now, the young man felt that he had some justification of his doubts.

It was true that the world regarded the eccentric habitant of the Folly as little better than a lunatic. Bertram Pleydell did not feel inclined to endorse that opinion after the interview which had just taken place. If Mrs. Dorton was mad, there was, at least, method in her madness.

Besides this she had impressed the young man favourably in other respects. True, her voice was not modulated to the pitch prescribed by fashion—true, also, that her manner had some bizzarerie about it, and her address was brusque. Still, under all, both speech and style showed that she was a gentlewoman, and in her sorrow, Captain Pleydell both sympathised with and pitied her.

And doing so, he made a mental resolve that when he next met Redmond, he would strongly urge upon his friend the necessity for dealing justly alike by the mother and the daughter. But Bertram's more immediate concern was with his rival, not with his friend.

To what did the strange woman's words refer but to some imposture on the part of Lord Boscawen? And what imposture was possible for him? But one—namely, that his whole pretensions were false, and that he was not really the son of the Marquis of Calderfield.

When Bertram Pleydell first put this astounding suggestion before him, it seemed too monstrous to be for a moment entertained. A plot so daring could never have been conceived by Mr. Villiers's unpretending secretary, who knew little of and mixed little with the world where Lord Calderfield's affairs were known or could be topics of conversation. But the idea recurred again and again, nor was it long before it had obtained a definite lodgment in Captain Pleydell's head.

Mankind is ever easily induced to believe the thing hoped. And Bertram Pleydell had a very strong hope that something was wrong with Boscawen's position. He honestly tried to be fair towards the latter. He strove to disabuse himself of hard thoughts of his kinsman. But his success in the matter was not conspicuous. What wonder that it was not? Both loved one woman, and we know, that while humanity remains what it is such rivalry will sunder even the fraternal bond.

Perhaps Pleydell told himself something to either confirm or dissipate this doubt of Boscawen's identity might transpire during the forthcoming pilgrimage to the little village graveyard where the dead marchioness lay. And the young soldier registered a mental resolve to keep the keenest watch upon the object of his suspicions while at Fernham.

It was arranged that when the young heir of Calderfield had fulfilled his father's behests in the matter of this journey to Fernham, he should return for a time to the Manor. Mr. Villiers would not hear of his ex-secretary's departure at present. Truth to tell, the expectation and hope of seeing his daughter fill the exalted role of the premier marchioness of the kingdom was overwhelmingly attractive to the master of the Manor. That proud distinction must be secured if possible.

Captain Bertram Pleydell was necessarily included in the invitation, partly on account of his relationship with the future marquis, but not less, perhaps, in regard to the fact that he was a pleasant companion. The young men travelled together to London, where they intended to break the journey.

Little conversation passed between them as the express whirled its living freight rapidly through the fertile and picturesque Western and Southern counties. They sat apart in their division of the first-class carriage which they occupied, each cigar in mouth, and apparently absorbed in the perusal of the morning journal. Arrived at the metropolis Lord Boscawen did not proffer to his cousin the hospitality of his chambers, but left the latter to seek the refuge of an hotel, and the men did not meet again that day.

Perhaps, in consequence of the long and confidential conversation which Boscawen held with his valet Giacomo, a visitor would have been a source of embarrassment. The next day they pursued their journey northward to Elwood, the Cumberland seat of the Calderfields.

Lord Boscawen had now thrown off much of his silence and moodiness, and during most of the way appeared in a state of excitement unusual to him. Pleydell responded readily to his companion's altered mood, but did not fail to watch its development with interest and curiosity.

But a great deal of the unwonted excitement which Boscawen exhibited died away as the end of the journey drew nigh, and when the young men alighted at the little country station where a brougham from Elwood awaited them, he again displayed his usual calm, restrained manner.

The Marquis of Calderfield received them with a joyful and affectionate welcome, and it was decided during the evening that on the second day subsequent the visit to Fernham should be undertaken.

It was evident to Bertram Pleydell's watchful eyes that however Lord Boscawen might desire to conceal the fact, the latter regarded the duty thus imposed upon him as one of an eminently disagreeable nature. The young soldier's suspicions were by no means weakened by this significant indication.

It having been arranged that Pleydell should form one of the party, the marquis and his two young companions, all dressed in mourning habiliments, left Elwood for the station at an early hour on the morning of the second day. The captain, who occupied the front seat of the open carriage in which they were, noticed a sudden change in the expression of the features of his companions sitting opposite at the moment when a turn in the road brought the stately and broad façade of Elwood into their field of view.

It was an intensified shade of sadness which came to the fine countenance of the old patrician. The expression which swept momentarily over the pale features of the younger man was dubious and indescribable as it was fleeting. Was it sorrow, was it contempt, was it suppressed satisfaction, or some subtle mixture of them all? the captain asked himself.

He knew what had caused the emotion to father and to son. He had noticed that above the grand portal of Elwood was suspended that sign of dignified mourning—a large hatchment where mingled blazonry of or and gules and argent and azure told that one of the ancient house of Calderfield had gone to the long rest, and the sable of whose sinister surface indicated that the dead was a female member of the line.

This had been affixed since the marquis had certitude of his wife's death. They were all very silent during the somewhat protracted railway journey. Nor were many words spoken as the three traversed the half mile of narrow, high-banked, leaf-strewn country road which led from the station of Fernham to the church, the vicarage, and little cluster of cottages which constituted the village.

They reached the church first. It was a small structure, evidently of great antiquity, for traces of Saxon masonry were blended with the early Norman work of its nave and tower. Around, under lofty elms, and bounded by a low wall of chipped flints, stretched the graveyard, beneath whose grassy pounds the "rude forefathers of the hamlet" slept, while here and there stood a few lichen-stained slabs bearing well-nigh obliterated inscriptions.

Boscawen had been too young at the time of his mother's interment to take much notice of the spot where her grave was made. It was necessary, therefore, that the sexton should be sought, and as the readiest means of finding him, the Marquis of Calderfield and his companions proceeded to make inquiries at the vicarage. They were received by the pleasant-faced, kindly young clergyman, who had the cure of souls of the little parish, and who sympathized at once with this mission, whose object the marquis briefly explained.

"It was not I, my lord," he explained, "who fulfilled the high but painful duty of soothing the last moments of Mrs. Olyfaunt—of the Marchioness of Calderfield I should say. That was done by my predecessor, whose curate I subsequently became, and upon whose death the patron of the living of Fernham presented me thereto. But I have often heard him speak of the lady, and I will take you to the sexton's cottage. Old Daniel Burnley filled the same office then, and he can be your guide."

The old man was readily found, and hobbleing along before the party they passed into the little churchyard and soon stood beside the little sunken mound of grass-grown earth beneath which reposed all that was mortal of Gwendoline Pleydell. Lord Calderfield bowed his head and knelt beside the tomb.

"Leave me for a space," he said. "In solitude must be passed the moments of deepest grief which consecrate an early death and a lifelong sorrow."

His companions withdrew reverently at the words, and upon the clergyman's invitation, the two young men accompanied him to the vicarage. The clergyman led them to his pleasant little study, from which the church and a portion of the public road which run by one side of the churchyard, was visible.

While engaged in sober conversation upon the subject of the marquis's mission Captain Pley-

dell and the vicar were almost startled by a sudden movement on the part of Boscawen. The latter sprang from his seat and crossed to the window.

The object which had apparently caught his attention was commonplace enough: a dilapidated little country cart, drawn by a spavined old pony, and conveying an old woman and a still more aged man.

Boscawen's movement had followed immediately upon the sudden halt of this equipage outside the churchyard wall in a position from which the occupant of the vehicle could in all probability catch sight of the mourner by the tomb.

"Who is that old woman in the cart?" he asked the clergyman, with some eagerness.

The vicar arose and stepped towards the window.

"I do not know," he replied. "The people are strangers."

Just then the old man shook the reins and the ancient pony started off again. Boscawen returned to his seat without further observation. When the marquis joined them he looked very pale and worn, and as the afternoon drew on, the party took their way back to Elwood.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

HUSBAND AND WIFE.

There is a shadow far within your eye
Which hath of late been deepening.

It is not well
If some dark thought be gathering o'er your soul
To hide it from affection. HERMES.

THE early days of Aricia and Redmond's wedded life passed like a happy dream, a dream which left them so utterly absorbed in each other's love that they asked nothing else of earth. But fate seems impatient of such felicity as this. Each had ties of kindred, duties in life, which could not be utterly set aside and ignored even in such happy hours.

Aricia, as was perhaps natural, under the circumstances of her flight from the Folly, felt this most deeply and most frequently. In her own happiness the contrast of her mother's solitary and deserted lot rose before her mind in its full intensity. And sometimes the desire to seek her mother out, to kneel before her and crave forgiveness—the wish to shed at least some reflex of her own felicity on the recluse's hard narrow life, grew in Aricia's bosom to a painful, almost bitter yearning.

More than once she had proposed, timidly, to Redmond that such courses should be taken. But the young man considered it would be premature and attended with risk to acquaint Mrs. Dorn-ton with the fact of the marriage before he had broken the matter to his own parent.

She was a woman of stern, intractable nature and violent passions. It was entirely uncertain how she might receive Aricia, and still more dubious in what light she would view his own conduct. At the best, her pride would insist upon Lord Redmond's father being immediately apprised of his son's marriage.

If Mrs. Dorn-ton could be supposed to overlook Aricia's disregard of her authority and wishes it was certain that the stern woman's pride would cause her to insist on the immediate recognition by Lord Redmond's family of her daughter's position. This was precisely the point that offered difficulties to the young man.

He loved his father tenderly, as the only parent he had known, his mother having died while Everard was yet an infant. The old man's affections and hopes were alike bound up in his son. But with all this he had come of an old and haughty stock, and Redmond questioned whether even parental love would lead the aged peer to overlook a mésalliance which would be terribly repugnant to his pride.

He had hardly held the daughter of Mr. Villiers worthy to enter the magic circle of his family, on the ground of her comparatively plebeian origin, for some members of that

branch of the Villiers had mixed themselves up with trade. How then would he regard the child of the outé dweller at the Folly? And then there were other reasons for delay.

If he made his marriage known, Redmond argued with himself, as a natural consequence he must introduce his wife to certain circles. But, as the girl had herself truly said, she knew nothing of the manners or amusements or tone of thought of good society. How could he bring out a wife who could not sing, play, valse, ride or croquet; who had never been at the opera or in the Row; who had not one single topic of conversation in common with the class to which he himself belonged—who, in fine, was about as well acquainted with the world as a girl taken from a primitive Indian village? It would never do.

Everard Redmond was proud of his beautiful wife, and desired above all that his own admiration should be shared by the world in which he moved. In order to ensure this, all that was necessary was a little delay in the introduction of the new Lady Redmond to fashionable circles.

In the calmer intervals of his enthralling happiness, when he forced himself to look steadily at the future with its claims and its duties, Lord Redmond planned his course. This was to first induce Aricia to submit to a brief term of such training as was needed to fit her for society.

In all the more solid departments of education Lady Redmond was more au fait than most whom she was likely to meet in Belgravia salons. Mrs. Dorn-ton, herself a ripe scholar, had taught the girl well. Not only had Aricia a perfect acquaintance with the principal modern languages, but also the tongues of old Greece and Rome were not unfamiliar to her. And to the ordinary historical and scientific knowledge which a young lady of the nineteenth century is expected to possess, or at least profess, the girl added an unusual degree of proficiency in mathematical studies.

It was in the knowledge of the pleasant things which make life go more smoothly and agreeably that Lady Redmond's shortcomings lay. Art, music, the drama, were to Aricia unknown domains. And in everything in the way of accomplishments, or that acquaintance with the conveniences of good society which is termed etiquette, she was still more hopelessly astray. But her parts were good, and at the first hint which her lover-husband gave she met his wishes with an eager anxiety.

In many things requisite Everard could himself overlook his wife's studies; but time sped, and it was essential that for certain accomplishments professional tuition should be obtained.

It was this necessity which reconciled Redmond to continuing the occupation of the small apartments at the little suburban house. A wedding tour on the Continent he had seen from the first to be impracticable, both on the head of his prolonged absence from his father's place being out of the question, and also on the score that Aricia would not consent to absent herself from England until her mother had become acquainted with her whereabouts and position, and a reconciliation had been effected. But although a continental tour was impossible, Lord Redmond would have wished to enshrine his adored bride amid surroundings more worthy of her than those of the little stuffy, old-fashioned rooms they occupied.

But if Aricia was to be safely concealed from her mother until the latter had become more placable, if she were to be kept secure from any chance of being seen in his company by any of his own acquaintances, whom such a rencontre might induce to conceive suspicions of the truth; if, in fine, it were necessary that for a space Aricia should be under tutors and masters, then the more obscure the retreat of the pair the greater the safety and more obvious the convenience thereof.

Inspired by love and the desire to please her husband, Lady Redmond made rapid progress. Though the girl's only music at the Folly had been the uplifting of her soft contralto voice in

some simple air to which she had heard Lam-bourne growl out an old country ballad, and her only dancing had been a mad romp with her favourite dog, yet ere many days had passed the tutors who come to the little house held up their hands in unfeigned astonishment at her quick apprehension and exquisite taste, and were loud in their expressions of delighted approval of a pupil who did them such infinite credit.

Signora Carlini had never met a lady who possessed a voice of greater compass and flexibility and so great a capacity for the acquisition of the art of music. Her only regret was that the lyric stage should be debarr'd from the hope of acquiring so promising a cantatrice.

Herr Struwwelpita expressed his wonder and gratification no less strongly; although the maestro's manner of doing so was less refined. "It is wonderful," he said, "wonderful. The fraulein did not know how to douch the piano, tid not know von sinkle note, and now—in von short vortnight—ach! mein himmel! she can interbret Mendelssohn! Mein vort! in ein month, I believe, the lady could eben attack the sublime works of the immortal Wagner."

And little Monsieur Pasdhop, the French dancing-master, who prided himself about equally upon his nationality, his well-formed calves, and the grace with which he could touch his "Kit," or little fiddle, pronounced solemnly at a very early stage of his lessons:

"Milad is de ver' best dancer I 'ave met evar! She valse most divine, comme an angel—as a sylph!"

Then, at times, Redmond would take his bride to the various art galleries by day, or to the theatres in the evening, avoiding those parts of the house where he might perchance meet any of his "set"—to borrow the help which the potent agency of art could render in imparting polish to Lady Redmond's mind and manner.

The success of his plans was complete, and Redmond saw with extreme delight that when the moment came to introduce his bride to the stern old peer at the paternal mansion, let the anger and objections of the latter be what they might, he would not be able to say that any heir of Redmond had ever brought home a fairer bride, or one better fitted to do the honours of the old house, and grace the family jewels of the ancient line.

To win this approving verdict and the old man's forgiveness was Everard's dearest hope. Aricia looked forward to this too, although with timidity and doubt not shared by her husband. But the young wife's cherished wish was for the pardon of her own parents—the stern-faced dweller at the Folly. Meanwhile the days went on, and no message came from Mr. Bouchier.

cawen questioned the clergyman. Prepossessed as the captain was against his cousin, the veriest trifle was sufficient to arouse his suspicions. He was silent and thoughtful during the return journey to Elwood, and his companions did not disturb his meditations.

The Marquis of Calderfield's sad, worn face showed that he was brooding over old griefs, which the pilgrimage of that day had awakened to new bitterness. Lord Boscawen, too, was taciturn and absorbed; his countenance wearing a moody look which had nothing in common with his father's sorrow. Before the end of the journey was reached Captain Pleydell had resolved upon one thing.

He would return to Fernham; he would, if it were possible, seek this old couple. He did not know exactly what he hoped or expected from this. He had merely some general idea that there was a mystery in Boscawen's past life which it behoved him to bring to light if it were possible.

The Marquis of Calderfield had understood that Pleydell's stay at Elwood would be but short, and was not surprised when the soldier declared next day that he must leave the hospitable roof. Lord Boscawen showed as plainly as he dared that he was desirous to escape his father's society and quit the mansion at the same time as his cousin, but found that it would not be politic on his part to press the matter, and relinquished himself, although with a very ill grace, to a few days' longer sojourn at the ancestral home of the Calderfields.

Perhaps if the young lord had guessed in what direction Bertram Pleydell was bound, his desire to accompany the latter would have been even stronger. The early afternoon of the second day saw the captain again at the little station of Fernham. He had matured his plans and had the course of action which he intended to follow ready cut and dried.

The object he proposed was to discover who the aged couple were, and the cause of the interest they had evinced in the mourner at Gwendoline Pleydell's grave. It was probably, he told himself, the foolish wonder of the rustic pair at seeing a stranger so engaged, and he would simply have his pains for nothing. That he was prepared for. The young man did not intend to call at the vicarage, nor indeed to visit the village at all. To do so would only excite the wonder of the courteous clergyman and could answer no good purpose.

In all probability the spavined old pony and the ramshackle vehicle were not bound on any long journey. The captain was not the man to shrink from a walk of a few miles on a country road amid pleasant scenery. He would simply follow the direction in which the cart had proceeded and institute inquiries as he went. So striking into the road a little before it reached the church he pursued the track by which the vehicle had gone.

For nearly four miles he followed the route, without coming to either a cottage or a cross road practicable to carts on right hand or left. Then came the welcome sight of a little wayside inn. It was welcome for more reasons than one. Hot and dusty as he was, Pleydell felt that he could do ample justice to a mug of the landlord's home-brewed, and it afforded also the first opportunity for inquiry as to the wayfarers.

When he entered the little bar-parlour, with its sanded floor, of the "Ship," the burly host looked at the young man somewhat askance as if dubious of his social condition. Pleydell was not of the usual class which resorted to the little inn. But the young man's cheery salutation and invitation to the landlord to assist in the disposal of a tankard of the best ale in the cellar soon set the host at his ease. Pleydell quickly discovered that he had come to the right place for information.

"Passed by here yesterday, did they?" said the man, in response to Bertram's questioning. "Ay, ay, surely. I mind it well. The old man ne'er passes the old 'Ship' w'out wetting his whistle, I'll goo bail. Ay, sure it wor Master Piper and Goody Piper. In' coorse it wor."

"Can you direct me to their residence?"

"Eh? Oh, I see. Ye want to know wheer they bide. Ay, ay. Ye must goo another three mile straight on eend. Then ye'll coom to some cottages on th' reet hand side, by the water-mill. Th' oon with th' honeysuckle o'er the porch be Measter Piper's home."

After a little conversation Captain Pleydell rose to pursue his journey. The landlord looked at him with some interest as he asked:

"Be ye th' emigration man?"

"I don't understand you."

"Be ye the man from th' emigration office at Liverpool, as is goin' to take Measter Piper oot?"

With a puzzled air Pleydell shook his head and turned from the door. He stepped out briskly and soon covered the three miles of road. The cottage with the honeysuckle-shaded porch was easily recognised. Bertram Pleydell strode up the narrow footpath which led to it and rapped at the door.

The summons was answered by an aged woman whose red-brown cheeks emulated those of a russetapple and whose smooth bands of grey hair and bright beady eyes, old-fashioned linen cap and quaint, scrupulously clean, attire made her a pleasant picture to look upon.

"You are Mrs. Piper?" queried the young man.

"Sure-ly, sir, I be," the woman responded, a little wonderingly.

"Can I have a few words with you?"

The dame drew back for him to enter the room drooping a little old-world curtsy. The room was as scrupulously neat and clean as its mistress, but nevertheless the latter carefully dusted with her blue check apron the bright Windsor chair she placed for the stranger.

"I am going to ask you a curious question, but it is a matter in which I feel much interest," said Pleydell. "I think you passed yesterday the churchyard of Fernham?"

"Ees, sir, that I did."

"A gentleman was kneeling in that churchyard. Am I mistaken in supposing you looked at him very attentively?"

"Dear, no, sir. I wor main surprised, an' so wor my ould man, to see anyone kneeling by her grave."

"Her grave?" You know then who was buried there?"

"Deed, an' I should think I do, sir. 'Twor Mistress Olyfaunt in coorse. Be you a relative of hern, sir?"

Undoubtedly he was a cousin of the Marchioness of Calderfield by marriage, Pleydell thought, and he had in consequence no scruple in answering in the affirmative.

"You arn't her son, sir?" said the old woman, eagerly peering closely into the young man's face with her beady eyes.

"No, I am only distantly related."

"And t'other gentleman, he as wor kneeling there, wor too ould for Basil, if Basil lives still. Who wor the gentleman?"

Bertram was on the point of responding "her husband," but checked himself. It was not his plan to answer, but to question.

"He is also a relative."

"Poor dear—poor dear, why could not her rich friends—for I can see that ye are both of the gentry-kind—as she wor too herself, poor lamb—why could ye not coom to her afore she were dead—afere she had lain under the green turf for sixteen long year?"

"Her friends did not know she was at Fernham. And you were acquainted with her?"

"Ees—ees, sir. She came to live in our little cottage; we were livin' at Fernham then, sir. She lived theer, and theer she died. 'Twer in my arms she drew her last breath."

"The lady was a stranger at Fernham?"

"Ye may well say that, sir. She wor a stronger when first she came. A poor broken-hearted lammie, who had ne'er a friend i' the world. But we all learned to love her well."

"Tell me what you can remember of her. It will bring comfort to those of her kith and kin—for she had such—when I take your words to them."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

QUESTIONING THE PAST.

Some mystery's here!

Like an unbaff'd sleuth-hound will I track

His many course, nor heart nor patience lack

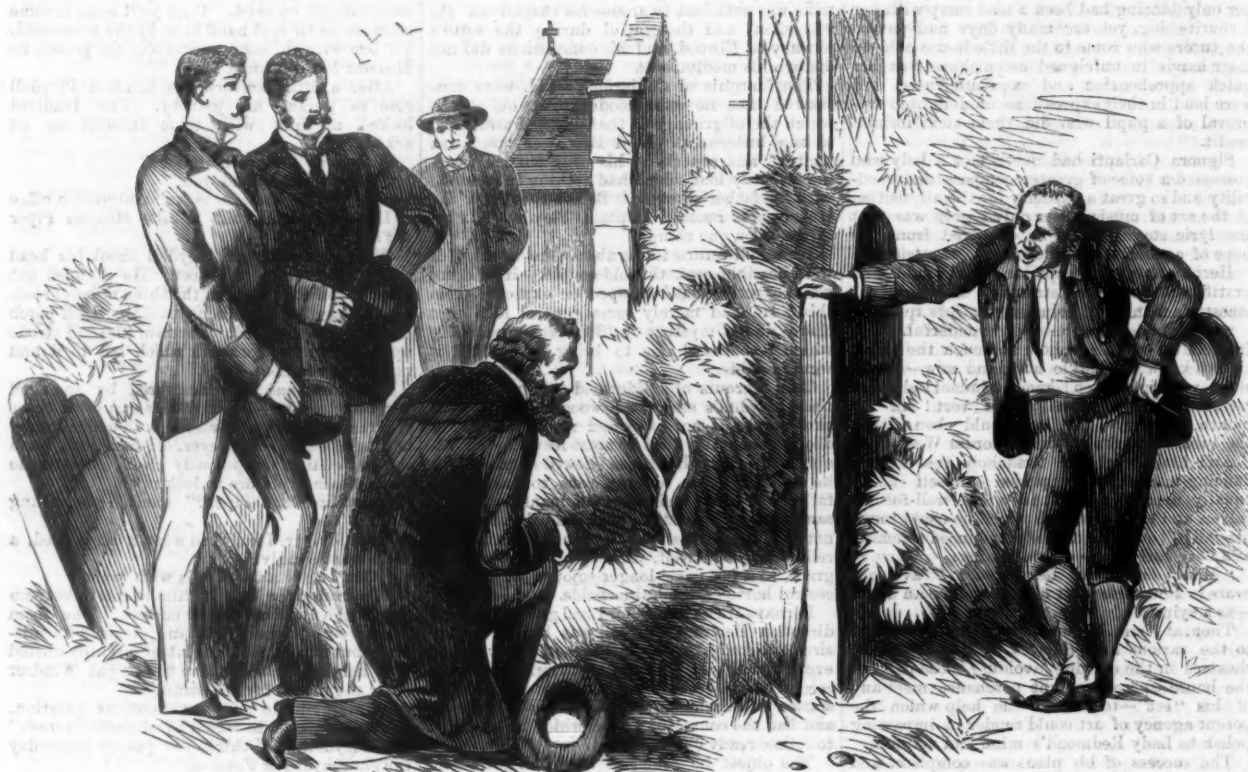
Until I find his lair. MARSTON.

"WHAT was in his thoughts?"

Bertram Pleydell asked himself the one question over and over, but could find no satisfactory response in his mind. Again and again he recalled to his mental view the strange expression which came to Lord Boscawen's face when the rustic vehicle with its aged occupants came to the latter's view.

Pleydell could recall the look, but was unable to analyse it. It was not sufficiently defined to be the indication of any passion. It was not even recognition. It seemed rather the vague dreaminess of the face of one on whom some faint, indistinct reminiscence gleams—a reminiscence so faint that he who experiences it is not conscious whether it belongs to some past event in far-away years, or is merely the dim memory of the dreams of the previous night.

Yet somehow the soldier could not help attaching an undue amount of importance to the seemingly trivial occurrence. It is probable that he would have passed it unnoticed, had it not been for the earnestness with which Bos-



[THE BELOVED DEAD.]

Thus exhorted the old dame launched out in a garrulous description of the dead woman, her appearance, her beauty, her sayings, her doings. Pleydell listened gravely with a strained attention. In spite of her provincial dialect the old woman's descriptions were lucid and striking, and Pleydell doubted not, minutely correct.

They told of a woman past the lustre of her youth, but very beautiful. A lady assuredly—one who was kindly, meek, patient, and who died in Christian faith and fortitude—but—no trait of the picture, personal or mental, corresponded with what Bertram Pleydell knew of Gwendoline, Marchioness of Calderfield.

He knew the bodily presence of the marchioness well. Did not her full-length portrait, by the most skilful limner England could boast, hang in the long gallery at Elwood—the last of a line of the historic house? In everything—in stature, in complexion, in mien—the woman of the portrait, and the woman of Mrs. Piper's graphic, earnest description were the very antipodes of each other.

Bertram Pleydell realised this discrepancy with a calmness which did not surprise him. It seemed, in some occult, unexplainable way, that this denouement was the goal to which all his conjectures and speculations had tended.

He was not hasty in his conclusions. Too much was at stake for that. Again and again, by dint of clever leading questions, he got the woman to describe her whom she had known as Agatha Olyfaunt. Bertram's tone was grave, and his face saddened as he asked, when Mrs. Piper's reminiscences had been told and retold:

"You will not mind telling this to a gentleman whom I may perhaps bring to see you, Mrs. Piper? He is more interested in the sad story than even I am."

"Wor it th' gentleman I saw yesterday?"

"Yes."

"Ay, ay, he wor a main grand-looking gentleman. But I don't know about telling him," she went on, dubiously. "When will ye bring him?"

Pleydell ruminated, silently for a few moments.

"In a few days, perhaps."

"I'll be glad to tell him of the poor lammie if I be here. But 'twill not be a mort of days afore we are leaving."

And in answer to farther queries of the young man he elicited that the old couple purposed leaving for America shortly, in order to join a son and daughter in Minnesota.

This by no means suited the young man's views. It was not possible, he felt, that he should spring this terrible news upon the marquis immediately. It might, after all, be a hallucination of Mrs. Piper's, and her memories of the dead woman, albeit so plainly told, might be unconsciously false. No, he must have time for consideration before matters were brought to a crisis.

"I may not be able to bring him at once," Pleydell said, evasively. "Could you not defer leaving until a following steamer? I will make good any pecuniary loss."

Mrs. Piper gave a little shriek of surprise and protest.

"What, put off seeing our lad and lass, and they have paid for our going, and will be awaiting us! Na, na, sir, the ould man an' me we can't do that. Our days are numbered now. Mebbe if we linger we'll ne'er see our childer this side the grave."

And from this point the captain's further pleadings were ineffective in moving the dame. At last he gave up the attempt in despair.

"Is there anyone else at Fernham who can tell me as much as you have done?"

"Deed no, sir, theer bain't. Mrs. Olyfaunt kept ay at home. She was a poor, weak birdie. 'Twer on'y the parson and the doctor and th' ould man and I who you can rightly say knew aught of her."

"The clergyman is dead?"

"Ees, he be, and so's the doctor."

Pleydell sat silent, pondering the best course to pursue.

"And did the little lad she loved well live

and grow up, sir?" asked Mrs. Piper, suddenly.

The captain answered in the affirmative. "I should ha' liked to see him rest well. Do you know him?"

Pleydell assented. "I wonder whether he would set store by his mother's bible if we could send it back o'er the salt sea. When Benjie an' Susie left us they took the book, for th' ould man and me had our big bible with the gays in. But Benjie, my boy, is rich now, and can spare the book if little Master Basil would care to have it. It has a grand sight of tiny writing in that his mother wrote."

Bertram's interest was roused afresh.

"Oh, ay," the old dame went on. "I know th' writing wor about hersen. But we couldn't read aught on't. The feyther and I can on'y read preent. Benjie and Shsie can read writing, they can, but not the leddy's, for it wor in French or some other outlandish tongue."

"But Mrs. Olyfaunt was an Englishwoman?"

"Deed, and she wor na', sir. She talked like we, on'y softer; but she came from—oh, ay, she's often tould me—she came from—from—where's the country wheer Rome be?"

"Italy."

"Ay, ay! Well, Mrs. Olyfaunt wor an Eyetalian, and the writing wor in Eyetalian, and if ye like, when I get to Ameriky, I send ye the book for the little Basil."

To this proposal Pleydell gave his hearty assent, and after some further conversation prepared to take his departure. As he rose he complained of thirst, soliciting a cup of water. Whilst Mrs. Piper was engaged in procuring this from the old-fashioned wooden pump behind the cottage, Pleydell took the opportunity of slipping a couple of sovereigns into the half knitted coarse grey stocking upon which she had been at work and had cast on the table at his entrance. It was with a mind full of busy thought that the soldier took his way back to the Fernham Station.

(To be Continued.)



[DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.]

UNDER A LOVE CHARM;

OR,

A SECRET WRONG.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

*"Christine's Revenge; or, O'Hara's Wife,"**"The Mystery of His Love; or, Who Married Them?" &c., &c.*

CHAPTER XIII.

BLIGHTED.

Maiden, wrap thy mantle round thee,
Cold the rain beats on thy breast;
Love has been a traitor to thee,
Death can let the wretched rest.

KIRK WHITE.

"You shall rue the day, you shall rue it! You have made my life desolate, but by Him who made you, you shall pay me—pay me for every hour of anxious waiting, every tear that I have shed, every sleepless night I have passed, wondering, counting the hours, repeating over to myself your false promises! You shall bite the dust even as I have bitten it; you shall eat your bread in shame even as I have eaten mine; you shall wet it with tears—tears wrung out of your selfish heart by your selfish fears!"

It was a woman's voice which spoke—a woman's voice which perchance might at one time have been sweet and musical, when tuned into harmony with hope and happiness, and deep, ardent first love. Now it had a harsh timbre; it grated on the ear; it was a young voice, but it had the harshness, the sharpness of age.

Athelstane Rodney was a true gentleman in every fibre of his frame. This was only the hovel of a poor man—the voice he heard raised in such a passion of anguish was only the voice of a peasant girl, but he knew that he had no

right to intrude at such a moment on such a scene.

Meanwhile the rain was descending in torrents. Miss Melrose would be wetted to the skin. She was terribly afraid of the thunder, and if her horse should take fright at the lightning, it was evident that the alarmed girl would not be able to keep her seat. Thus, hating himself for his rude intrusion on the sorrows and secrets of other folks, he sprang from his horse, threw his bridle over a low post, took the horse of Clemence by the bridle and led him up to the open door of John Bainston's cottage.

He heard a door slam loudly. It was evident that somebody had retired out of sight upon hearing the noise of the horse's hoofs. There was only one solitary figure in the large, low kitchen, with its raftered roof, clay floor, and dresser of dark stained wood, with its array of poor cups and mugs and quaint, ugly earthenware jugs.

There was no grate, but a fire of sticks was kindled on the raised stone under the huge, wide chimney. On a wooden bench drawn close under the whitewashed wall, there crouched the shrinking figure of a dark-haired girl. Her face was hidden in her hands; she was rocking herself to and fro. Her gestures, her attitude, were expressive of the deepest despair. It seemed a cruelty, almost a sacrilege, to intrude on so much sorrow, but Athelstane had no alternative.

"I beg your pardon," he began, courteously, "but this lady is afraid of the storm. May I ask for shelter for her for half-an-hour?"

The girl started most violently at the sound of Athelstane's voice. She looked up from her hands and disclosed a face white to ghastliness, with lips shut fiercely together; her long, jet-black hair had partly escaped from its fastenings, and hung in a sable stream over her left shoulder. Her dress was a poor cotton, ill-made and faded, a thin, insufficient defence against winter cold. She looked up at Athelstane almost like one awakening out of a sleep, and she said:

"Come in, if you like. There is nothing to sit on but this bench, and—I am too tired to stand; I have walked too far."

All the while she was looking with the strangest scrutiny into Athelstane's face. He had left Clemence for a moment at the door; he rushed out now, lifted her from the saddle, and actually carried her into the kitchen. Miss Melrose made neither protest nor resistance. She was one of those persons whom terror of thunder and lightning reduces to a state of child-like meekness and fear.

Who would have supposed that had seen this young lady an hour ago in the saddle erect, alert, courageous to recklessness, daring, defiant, mocking, thinking nothing of leaps that made old huntsmen shrink, that the rumbling of thunder, the flash of winter lightning, could have made her so timid and so humble?

Athelstane adored her in her gentler mood. She was no longer a haughty goddess; she was a woman beautiful as an angel and trusting as a child. He looked all round the whitewashed walls of the poor cot in search of a chair or stool or settle. There was not one. The girl with the black hair and white face still occupied the only seat the room afforded. She did not attempt to stir.

"Could you not lend this lady a chair?" Athelstane said, with his fascinating smile. "Have you not one in another room?"

"No. The agent distrained for rent last week. There's nothing in this house but hunger and sorrow!"

Clemence, who had been standing in a drooping attitude before the fire, lifted her lovely head when she heard this, and looked pityingly at the pale girl.

"Then you are married?" she began.

A spasm of anguish passed over the girl's face.

"Is it only married people that come to grief?" she asked, with a terrible little smile.

"No, I am not married. My father is Sir Peter Lingham's gamekeeper. The wages are not enough to keep a man and woman and six

young children and pay rent, when sickness comes, as it always does come in damp holes like this. We are hungry and cold and half clothed to a degree that would rejoice the hearts of certain preaching folks who come and tell one how thankful one should be for one's poverty, since it puts us beyond the temptations of pleasure and finery. 'This is my only dress.' She smiled bitterly as she pointed to the shrunken sleeve. 'Don't you think I ought to be very thankful that I have no chance of indulging in the weakness of female vanity, decorating myself with ribbons and silver lockets, and dresses trimmed with silk?'

'We are not preaching people,' cried Clemence, speaking with eagerness, 'and we don't think anything of the kind. Your landlord, Sir Peter, must be a brute, and if I ever have an opportunity I will tell him so.'

The storm had much abated by this time; the thunder had rolled away, and the alarm of Clemence passed off with the tempest. She looked now lovelier than ever; her great dark eyes shining with tears of the tenderest compassion; a lovely glow had returned to her cheeks; her red lips trembled.

'What can I do for you?' she said, presently. 'I am an extravagant girl, and have already exceeded my month's allowance.'

The girl burst into a scornful, hard laugh.

'That is the story all of you fine folks tell us, that you would help us only you won't. It makes me ill to hear the same old tale so often. Don't talk to me, please.'

She half turned her head away, leaning her cheek in one hand, supporting the elbow of that arm in the left hand, and rocking herself backwards and forwards in a peculiar and restless fashion. Clemence went up close to her.

'I wish to help you. I will help you,' she said, eagerly. 'I like your spirit, it resembles my own. You cannot tell falsehoods. I am sure I am not at all surprised at your hating gentle-folks; indeed, I hate them myself, though I belong to them, they are so selfish. But now I have very little money in my purse, only ten shillings. I will give you that and send you more.'

As she spoke she drew a dainty purse from a side pocket in her habit; took out half a sovereign and put it into the girl's hand.

'Thank you,' the girl said, languidly. 'You are the beauty, I should think, that has been expected to visit Wolvermoor. Is not your father a lord, and your grandfather an earl? And are you not a great heiress? How happy you ought to be, unless—'

The girl paused.

'Unless what?' Clemence asked.

'Unless you loved anybody that did not love you, or that died.'

Clemence started very violently.

'You must not talk like that to me,' she cried, impetuously. 'You must not—you must not. It is quite impossible that you should know whether anybody that I loved is dead or not. Indeed, I never loved. I cannot love. It is not in me,' she went on, after a pause. 'And now let us talk of you, and what has reduced you to this condition. You don't speak like a cottager's girl; you speak like an educated woman.'

'I was taken away from this place when I was twelve, by a lady who was visiting at Hazlemere Hall, Sir Peter's house. She took me to London, and I learnt to read better, and to write also. I learnt, besides, to sew; I learnt to make dresses and trim bonnets. I was a little useful maid; she took me about with her everywhere, to Malvern and Bath and Cheltenham, and even to Paris and to Switzerland and Germany. I had good wages and nice clothes; I had plenty of time to myself; I spent it in reading. I read all kinds of books, and picked up all kinds of knowledge. I began to think I was a lady—as good a lady as my mistress, who was a kind but narrow-minded old maid. She hated the idea of love or husbands; indeed, for some reason she hated men so awfully, that she used to say that if ever I did such a thing as pick up a sweetheart, or think of a husband, she would send me away; but if I would live

single all my life and give her a written promise never to marry she would leave me a thousand pounds in her will.

'Old Miss Singleton was as cruel as a tiger-cat towards love and lovers. I used to send home half my wages here to my father and my mother, and my little sister and brothers. I had painful letters from them. Sir Peter had shut up his house after the death of his wife, and had gone to live in Italy, and the agent is a demon, who reduced the wages and raised the rents, and the children all had the fever, and my mother was then just confined. Ah! it was a sad tale of misery that I read; and then came news; six months had passed, and my father had not paid any rent, and Wilson the agent had distrained, and the children had no beds and no blankets, no chairs, no table. As I read the letter it seemed to me almost like a sad story in a book with which I had nothing to do personally, for I had a great trouble then of my own.

'I was in London with my mistress. She had rooms at the Langham Hotel. Something happened. She turned me away without a moment's warning—without a word of pity. I came back here, for I had nowhere else to go, and I added to the heavy burdens that cruel fortune had laid upon my parents. I sold my clothes and trinkets to buy them and myself bread. To-day my mother and all the children are gone up to Hazlemere Hall. She has even taken her youngest child, who is not more than a year old, because she says I am too wild to be trusted with him. The old housekeeper at the Hall, Mrs. Moss, is kind-hearted. She has had a letter to say that Sir Peter is now coming home in a great hurry, and means to fill his house with visitors and their friends.

'There are numbers of mattresses which require to be picked to pieces and put together again; for this work children's fingers are useful, so Mrs. Moss will give them a shilling apiece and a good dinner all round. My father is cutting wood; his wages are twelve shillings a week. Now, I have told you some of my troubles, but not all of them.'

A delicate intuitive perception urged Athelstane to go outside the poor cot to consult the weather and look after the horses. While he was absent, Clemence said, in a hurried whisper, but in soft, womanly fashion:

'Tell me your name and what your trouble is, and why Miss Singleton turned you away?'

'My name is Margaret Bainston, and Miss Singleton turned me away because I was about to become the mother of a child, while I was not a wife. My child was born here only last week.'

The eyes of Clemence flashed fire.

'What is the name of the wretch who has brought this dishonour on you?' she asked.

'I have sworn to proclaim it from the house-tops,' Margaret answered, with a terrible smile, 'and to make him ashamed before the faces of his fine friends. His name is Horace Rodney. He is the heir of Sir Robert Rodney, of Wolvermoor Hall, in this county. Do you know him? Yonder man, who came in with you, must be his twin brother, for he is so like him, and he has a twin brother, I know.'

Clemence stamped her foot on the clay floor of the hut.

'Wretch!' she said, 'I will punish him. It is in my power.'

And she smiled a rather cruel smile.

'I will humble him and crush him, as he has humbled and crushed you.'

Margaret's black eyes shone for a moment with an angry light.

'You mean that you will win his heart and break it, as he has won mine and broken it? He has no heart, I think. He has strong passions, but no heart.'

'He shall be punished,' said Clemence, with flashing eyes. 'Wait and you will see his punishment.'

But Margaret only shook her head.

'It is impossible,' she said, 'to make him feel in that manner, for indeed he has no feeling; but you may wound his vanity, perhaps,

and his self-love; nothing else. He is a most heartless man and most utterly selfish; still he may be punished; he has an uncle to whom I will show the child, who is my shame, but who should have been my pride. I will not rest until the whole world knows what a villain's part he has played. He is an officer in a crack regiment; he is as beautiful to look on as a Greek god that I have seen chiselled in marble. He called with an old colonel, who was a friend of Miss Singleton's, to see her. He observed me. He smiled; he sent me a letter telling me that I had won his heart; that he could not live without me. No word of marriage, true, did he pen, but he spoke the most impassioned words that man ever uttered to woman; and then I gave him my heart. I trusted in his love; I thought of him only night and day; love had been forbidden me by my mistress, and hitherto whenever a fancy or liking for a young man had entered my heart I had successfully stifled it, but now I was nineteen—the age to love. My love for Horace Rodney was stronger than my resolves, stronger than my desire to inherit one thousand pounds, or fifty thousand pounds. It was the very folly of self-devotion. I did not wish him to marry me and ruin himself with his uncle; all I desired was that he should love me, and me only, and be faithful to me.'

Margaret's white set face was something terrible at that moment. She clenched her teeth; she looked up at the rafters and seemed to call down imprecations on the man who had ruined her life.

'I saw a change in him,' she went on: 'he grew cold; he absented himself; he left my letters unanswered. When we did meet he spoke slighting words. At last I told him what would happen to me. I asked him for money, that I might go away, and he answered me with threats. He called me a jade, whose only object was money, and he swore that he was in debt, and dared not ask his uncle for another sovereign. A month after that Miss Singleton found out all, and sent me away. His regiment was at that time quartered at Plymouth. He had not answered my letters or sent me a shilling. I could not follow him there, to Devonshire, a distance of three hundred miles. I came home to wait for the time of my trial to be over. It is over now, and Horace has come down to Wolvermoor. He knew all the time that I was Bainston, the gamekeeper's daughter, but he has hitherto thought me meek and gentle until to-day. Last week I sent him a note telling him that I was here, and asking to see him. He has been away; but my letter was sent after him, and he has been here to-day; he has seen me in this ragged dress; he knows that I am cold and hungry; he has seen my almost naked babe, and he has still refused me money, help or pity. I spoke to him; I let him see what was in my heart; I have threatened him with such a vengeance as few women take, and he has answered me with threats; he has defied me to do my worst. Just as you came to the door he went out through the back kitchen to escape you. If you are on a visit to Wolvermoor you will see him there on your return serene and cheerful; but let him not forget that I am on his trail—that I am following him; that my vengeance, if slow, is sure and steady.'

Margaret shook from head to foot. At that moment Athelstane put in his head at the door.

'The rain is over,' he said, cheerfully. 'Let me put you into the saddle, Miss Melrose.'

Clemence took one of Margaret's hands and held it between her own.

'I will send you money in a few days,' she whispered. 'Believe me, I pity you from the very bottom of my heart.'

Then she went outside, and Athelstane lifted her into the saddle immediately. He returned to the wretched Margaret, part of whose story he had heard, and he placed a sovereign in her hand.

'I am poor, or I would offer you more,' he said, and then he ran out again, sprang into his

saddle, and rode along side by side with beautiful Clemence.

She was excessively silent, and seemed full of perplexed thought.

CHAPTER XIV.

A DETESTABLE MAN.

Beware, my lord, of jealousy;
It is a green-eyed monster
Which doth mock the meat it feeds on.

SHAKESPEARE.

SCARCELY one word did Clemence utter during the three miles ride.

"She is so full of pity for that unhappy girl," Athelstane said to himself, and he felt convinced in his own mind that Margaret had been betrayed "by some rascal," as he said passionately to himself.

Little did he think that the rascal was his own twin brother. Meanwhile the absent-minded coldness of Clemence stung him to the quick.

"She thinks I am an idiot," he said to himself. "The only time she pays me any attention is when she is mocking or tormenting me, and yet—yet I have sworn that Clemence Melrose shall be my wife!"

As soon as the young lady and gentleman had passed through the avenue of Wolvermoor, and came in sight of the mansion, Athelstane hastened to assist Miss Melrose to dismount. Almost without thanking him she passed rapidly into the house, saying a little crossly:

"I am tired to death; it has not been any pleasure after all. I shall go to my room and have tea, and lie down until it is time to dress for dinner."

Athelstane gave the horses into the charge of a groom, and was going a little vexed towards the dining-room, when the door burst open and his brother Horace came out. Never has the sun shone on a handsomer man than Horace Rodney. He was tall as his twin brother and distinguished by the same perfection of feature, but his complexion was bright and fair; his eyes of the clearest blue. His hair, of a beautiful chestnut tint, was cropped close to his picturesque and nobly formed head, but rippled all over it in an irrepressible curliness; his heavy golden moustache was trained in the most approved military fashion.

Certainly it seemed that any young lady, already heart-whole, who should be thrown in the way of this dashing young officer would be in some danger of becoming fascinated, supposing the careless, brilliant fellow chose to wile away a few dull hours by paying her compliments and uttering those soft nothings that steal feminine hearts as stealthily as a London pickpocket steals a purse.

And Clemence seemed heart-whole so far as Athelstane knew. There was no record of her having ever been guilty even of the passing weakness of a preference. The girl seemed fancy-free as a child. She had a heart surely, if one could find it out, and a warm and passionate one, judging by the deep, dark, dreamy eyes.

Was Horace fated to win that priceless heart? The thought lashed Athelstane to madness. As his splendid-looking brother advanced to meet him, it seemed to him that he was privileged to win all the great prizes of life. He was heir to this stately house, with its treasures of art, its plate, its pictures, its family jewels, if he chose to carry out his uncle's wishes and marry his cousin Eva; but if they did not marry, then he was still heir to the lands and the mines and the forests and the farms, bringing in an income of fifty thousand a year and the title "Sir Horace Rodney," of Wolvermoor Hall, Yorkshire. How well it sounded, and how many Belgravian mothers regarded him as a prize. Clemence might give him her heart.

"And if she does," said Athelstane to himself, "something tells me that I shall run mad. I think that would be more than I could bear, for I don't believe he would value the prize after he had won it."

"Well, old fellow!" cried Horace, gaily, laughing and showing his magnificent teeth.

"So here you are; been hunting, have you? Where did you find the fox?"

"Not far from Hazlemere Hall," Athelstane answered.

"And I hear that the beauty of the season was with you, and that you have the brush. Is that true?"

"It is in my pocket," Athelstane answered, gloomily.

"Ah, what a sly dog you are!" Horace cried, with another laugh, "to get away all by yourself with the beauty. I have only just arrived myself, as hungry as a hunter. I left my luggage at the station and hired a horse and—"

"You did?" he said. "Why forty minutes or an hour ago I was near Bainton's, the keeper's cottage, on the borders of the thicket, on the edge of the Hazlemere estate, and I saw a fellow ride over the moorland at the back that I could have sworn was yourself, if I had not supposed you were in York. I could swear to your build, and the horse was a screw, was it not? What in the name of Fate took you to the keeper's cottage. It was you that I saw. Why did you hire a horse to go there instead of a carriage from the station? Was it because you did not want a witness? Oh, Horace, what mischief have you worked to that poor Margaret Bainton. I heard her reproaching someone with being her ruin, and whoever the fellow was he went out the back way and slammed the door. So that was you, was it?"

Athelstane's lip curled with a withering scorn. He had the greatest contempt for any man who by dint of falsehood and the most cruel species of fraud cheated a trusting and loving woman out of her innocence and self-respect, and left her to be trodden into the dust—a creature at whom other women raised hands and eyes, and at sight of whom they gathered up their garments around them, fearing contact, and passed on to the other side.

"That was you," repeated Athelstane, in a louder key.

"Come along, my dear fellow," Horace answered, with a half frown, "Come to my room, and let us discuss this matter."

As he spoke he led the way across the hall, opened a door, and went along a narrow carpeted corridor. At the end of this was a door by which Horace entered, and his twin-brother followed him. This "sanctum," as Horace Rodney designated his private room, was a handsomely fitted up and most luxurious apartment, containing everything that a fashionable and rather fast young bachelor can require in the shape of guns, fishing-rods, meerschauts, portraits of celebrated actresses, and luminaries of the demi-monde, adorned the walls. These were mostly exquisitely coloured photographs enlarged to life size and splendidly framed.

All the furniture was of gilded ebony, upholstered in crimson silk, rich and costly. The Axminster carpet was of a sombre but glowing magnificence; the colours were purple and gold. A large plate-glass window opened upon a lawn, which in summer was embroidered with the richest flowers.

Horace flung himself with an air of abandon upon a soft couch, and proceeded to light an Indian pipe mounted in gold and emeralds, which he took from his pocket.

"I must have a few whiffs before I allow myself to be upset," the dashing young officer said with a smile. "I was going in for a good lunch, but I think now I will put off eating till dinner-time. Maroon is an excellent cook, and is sure to give us some delicious entrées. Now then, fire away, old fellow. So you heard that amiable she-wolf abusing me? Upon my soul I will confess that I should not like to meet that woman in a lonely lane without witnesses. There is something bloodthirsty about the creature. She is hungry and starving, and has only one dress, she tells me, and there are no clothes for the kid. What a muff she was not to drown it like a kitten before it had opened its eyes; it's not too late now!"

Mr. Horace Rodney, lounging backwards on his couch of crimson silk, and occupied in the

adjustment of his Indian pipe set with gold and emeralds, did not see the terrible and dark shadow that passed over the face of his twin brother, for he was not looking at him: If he had been he might have been shocked at the wrath and contempt and almost wild horror that flashed in Athelstane's dark eyes. Horace, meanwhile, went on; his eyes were now fixed on the glowing fire, and he folded his arms.

"These patent grates in which the fire only wants making once a day, are glorious inventions. I have every comfort in my sanctum, haven't I? Would you mind opening the doors of that black cabinet? In the drawer are some gold coins and cut gems that the old man gave me with many speeches on my last birthday. I would sell the lot for twenty pounds, I am so horribly off for cash, though he tells me they are worth two hundred. Underneath, if you will be so good as to open the doors, you will see two long-necked bottles; one contains the finest cognac, the other is sparkling moselle. We have no drinking glasses here, but on the top shelf are two goblets of green Venetian glass. Put some cognac into one for me, will you, there's a good fellow? And do you see that corkscrew with the silver handle? draw the cork of the Moselle for yourself; it will refresh you after your ride."

"Thanks, no, I want nothing. I cannot eat or drink when I am discussing the anguish of a human soul. There is your cognac."

He poured out some as he spoke, and lifted an exquisite jug of white crystal filled with clear water.

"Ha! stop, only a dash of water!" cried Horace. "I am not a schoolgirl to be afraid of brandy," he added, with a laugh.

He took the goblet from his brother's hand, and quaffed heartily, then placed it on a small table.

"Yes, that is good," he said; "it puts courage into a man, they say; not that I fail in that. I always take everything, no matter what, with the greatest coolness. So you heard the she-wolf howling, did you?"

"I heard a miserable, broken-hearted woman reproach you with your cowardly treachery."

Athelstane's voice trembled with rage. Horace, who had been wrapped in the enjoyment of his pipe, and who was half asleep besides from the effect of fatigue, attendant on his long railway journey and his subsequent ride, now opened his beautiful eyes in amazement and fixed them on his brother.

"My dear fellow," he said, "do you suppose fellows go through the world without these little affairs occurring? They are annoying, of course, and they want to be well managed, of course; but, after all, they are nothing when you are used to them. It's a nuisance I have no money to give the virago; but I can't help it; she has no proof that I was the fellow who deceived her, as she calls it. She says she means to come up to the house while all the visitors are here next week and kick up a row, and make a scene, and disgrace me, as she says. I don't care a snap. I shall tell Larkins to set the dogs at her if she comes inside the grounds."

Horace helped himself to another draught of the cognac, put his pipe into his mouth again, and went on smoking with the greatest composure. Athelstane watched him, he himself being in a species of wrath none the less violent because it was dumb. He had always known that Horace was intensely selfish, but he had never thought him so thoroughly inhuman, so possessed with evil and cruelty, so unjust, "so void of manly honour," in a word, as he said to himself in his honest and manly rage, "so detestable."

As he lay there smoking on the crimson couch utterly reckless of the life or death of the girl whose love he had taken such pains to win, he seemed to Athelstane to be, in spite of his glorious physical beauty, a loathsome and deadly reptile, and was this handsome wretch, who had won the confidence of Sir Robert, who was one day to be Sir Horace Rodney, was he to win the love of Clemence Melrose? The thought nearly drove Athelstane frantic.

"Do you think you have no responsibilities as a human being, Horace?" Athelstane asked.

"If I have, they don't trouble me," the young man said, with a laugh. "What I want now is a hundred pounds out of the old man. It's rather awkward, because I had five hundred last month, and can't account for a penny."

"Why?" asked Athelstane, sternly.

"You growl at me like a bear," Horace answered. "Why, indeed, because there's an actress called Clare Alma who had two hundred of it for a necklace; and the other three I lost—two on the turf, and one in two nights playing Napoleon."

"Delightful," said Athelstane, with contempt.

"Well, it didn't much matter," the brilliant Horace said, coolly; "there is plenty more where that came from, of course."

"Where?" asked Athelstane, sharply.

"Where? Why in the old man's bank, of course; it only wants a little scheming to get it out of him. Will you help me, like a noble and philanthropic brother. Ha! ha! ha!" and Horace actually indulged in a brief, merry shout of laughter. "You set up, you know, Athy, for kindness and all that sort of thing," continued Horace. "Try and make the old man open his coffers, will you?"

"He gives me exactly eighty pounds a year," said Athelstane, bitterly, "and I have to work hard for my bread."

"Yes; but you like it," the handsome Horace answered, with provoking composure. "You go in for all the virtues and hardships of life, I go in for its pleasures and its vices, if you choose to call them so. I want a hundred pounds awfully."

"If I try to make Sir Robert advance it, how much will you give to Margaret Bainston and her child?"

"Hang Margaret Bainston and her child," said the future baronet.

"It is only for their sakes that I will consent to help you," Athelstane said.

"I tell you what," cried insolent Horace, "why don't you marry the girl just out of pity yourself; she has lots of sense; has read much; can speak French; looks pretty when she's well dressed. I mean to have this exquisite Clemence Melrose, who is visiting here. I have fallen desperately in love with her likeness, and those girls have each of them three thousand a year apiece when they arrive at the age of twenty-three. I have quite made up my mind to win Clem. They say she has never been tamed, and has never loved. Now I shall come and see and conquer."

A wild wrath surged like a whirlpool in the soul of Athelstane Rodney. How was it that he felt that his brilliant brother would succeed in becoming more to Clemence than he was? He walked to the window and looked out. Dusk was fast gathering over the lawns and shrubs; the moon rose red over an ivy-covered, ruined archway in the grounds. Looking absently towards this, Athelstane was surprised to see a slight white figure emerge from it and approach the house.

All at once he lost sight of it among the trees, and at the same moment a most fearful scream rent the air. There was something so appalling, so fearful in the shriek that even the selfish Horace was roused out of his apathy. He started up, and cried aloud:

"Great heaven! what is the matter?"

As he spoke, the cry was repeated.

"Close the shutters! Lock the doors!" shouted Horace, in a voice of positive fear.

Was Horace a coward after all?

(To be Continued.)

A CORRESPONDENT says he has authority for stating that the Duke of Connaught has asked to go out to the seat of war in Afghanistan in any capacity that may be thought fit. But the Queen has in the most absolute manner refused the patriotic request of her son.

THE TIME FOR SLEEP.

SLEEP obtained two hours before midnight, when the negative forces are in operation, is the rest which most recuperates the system, giving brightness to the eye and a glow to the cheek. The difference in the appearance of a person who sits up until twelve, is quite remarkable. The tone of the system, so evident in the complexion, the clearness of and sparkle of the eye, and softness of the lines of features, is in a person of health kept up at a "concert pitch" by taking regular rest hours before twelve o'clock, thereby obtaining the "beauty sleep" of the night. There is a heaviness of the eye, a sallowness of the skin, and absence of that glow in the face that renders it fresh in expression, and round in appearance, that readily distinguishes persons who keep late hours.

HAVE PATIENCE!

A LOVER, so the story goes,
(Like other lovers, I suppose,
A bright, ingenuous youth.)
For years had his addresses paid
Devotedly to one fair maid,
The fascinating Ruth.

Who would her lover charm or vex,
Like many others of her sex,
Just as she felt inclined;
And, pleading ever for delay,
She would not fix the wedding day,
Nor change her fickle mind.

At last, to prove his discontent,
Unto the maiden's father went
This much tormented youth.
Who, grieved to see him looking sad,
Exclaimed: "You must have patience,
lad!

A whimsey maid is Ruth!"

Have patience! Did he hear aright?
And was it thus he might requite
The wrongs he had endured?
Since Ruth appeared to be in sport,
Her sister, Patience, he might court,
And find his bliss secured.

The father's sage advice he found
Was medicine for every wound,
The balm for every smart.
For soon he learned to know the truth,
That 'twas not love he felt for Ruth,
Such as now ruled his heart.

Thus may advice misunderstood
Contribute to a lover's good,
And prove the end of strife.
If Ruth be fickle or unkind,
Have Patience—and you'll surely find
A more congenial wife. J. P.

OFFICIALLY SEALED UP.

A HUNGARIAN paper recounts in graphic terms a singular little drama which took place in a small town near Pesth, in the shop of a chemist or apothecary, whose assistant had cultivated the affection of a fair maid living not far off. The course of true love encountered in this case very few obstacles, and indeed seemed in a fair way of proving an exception to the general rule by running smoothly to its orthodox conclusion; for the proprietor of the establishment having died, the assistant found himself in a position to make a bid for the shop and the business, and was in course of negotiating the transfer of the property to himself. The two lovers were exploring the premises, and no doubt indulging in bright visions of the future, when a sudden apparition presented itself in the shape of a legal goods and chattels official.

The assistant and his fiancée, whose attachment to one another had not yet been published to the world, were struck with sudden confusion and alarm, and the latter made her escape into a wardrobe, upon which her admirer quickly turned the key. The official proceeded to make out his inventory, and sealed up the door of the wardrobe, as well as those of the other rooms and receptacles. He then departed, leaving the custody of the whole place in charge of the young man, and specially directing his attention to the severity of the legal penalties enacted against those who break or allow to be broken the seals attached in the usual way. There remained now to the hero of the tale only three courses: either to allow the lady to endure the pangs of semi-starvation, to incur the grievous pains and penalties of the criminal law, or to disclose all, and invoke the clemency of the testamentary court. The latter was the course ultimately adopted; but it was many hours before the requisite authority could be obtained and the too rash or too timid lady could be released from her uncomfortable hiding-place.

A SHORT WORLD.

THIS is a short world. We may praise it or despise it; we may love or grow weary of it; but however we may esteem it, its course is very brief compared with the vastness of the world to come—the glory of the endless ages that stretch themselves before the saints of Heaven. Compared with the mighty possibilities of the everlasting state, how brief, how transient, how uncertain is the stage in which we live. Our life is a vapour that vanisheth away; our days are swift as an arrow's flight; time hastens on with restless strides, and the great, grand future of eternity rolls steadily onward to meet us as we pass the boundaries of this transient world.

Oh, that we who have been charmed by earth's beauties, and entangled amid its snares, could learn how brief its story is; how soon its pomp shall fade; how soon its joys shall pass away. "The life that now is," is like one grain of sand as compared with the wide-reaching shore, and the joys and pleasures that have here engaged our thoughts are but motes in the sunbeam when compared with the enduring glory which shall fill the eternal existence of God's redeemed with brightness and gladness perpetual as the years of heaven.

This is a short world; whether it be filled with joy or sorrow, light or shade, it matters little. Here we are to work or wait, but soon all will be over, and the eternal day will dawn; the clouds and shades and storms will pass, and oh, that we, when the morning breaks, may, as "children of light," be found watching and waiting, prepared for the bright and everlasting day.

EDUCATING GIRLS TO BE MOTHERS.

WE do not know, says a contemporary, who first used the phrase "educating girls to be mothers," but we fancy it is quite as capable of explanation as the phrase "woman's fullest development." Educating a girl to be a mother, we presume, means very much the same thing as educating a boy to be a father. A boy is educated to be a father by preparing him to earn a living in some honest calling; or, in other words, to support a family in comfort, and behave well in all respects as the head of a family. But such an education has to have in view the calling he will probably pursue, and not any vague thing called his "fullest development."

If a boy is going to be a mechanical engineer, it is not educating him to be a father to occupy a large portion of his time in his learning years with music and the classics. He would doubtless, as a father, be the better of music and the classics, just as every hotel waiter would be the better of a university education and foreign

travel; but in education, as in other things, the limitations of human life, of human capacity, and of the labour market, have to be taken into account. So, also, in educating a woman to rear children and manage a household, you educate her for the calling which eighty per cent. of her sex follow. It may be a small or mean calling, as most callings are, full of drudgery and containing little chance for the "fullest development," but it is a tremendous fact from which there is no escape.

The truth is that the passion for "development," and impatience of inevitable daily duties, is one of the greatest causes of the social troubles through which we are passing. It is at the bottom of the Kearney insanity. If one sifts his ravings, one finds that, in so far as he represents anything, he represents the wide-spread desire to abandon dull labour and begin "developing." His way of accomplishing his object is to sit down and issue "city scrip" for the supply of his wants, which is, of course, childish; but wiser and more intelligent people than he are touched by this madness. The best cure for it is the thorough indoctrination of the young with the belief that the prime object of education is preparation, not for an ideal sphere, but for the duties which in all probability the pupil will have to perform, however lowly they may be; and no worse injury can be done to a young person than by sneering at him as something unworthy of his highest powers.

CLARA LORRAINE;

—OR—

THE LUCKY TOKEN.

CHAPTER XXIV.

LINA, who had all the way to the house been cheering herself with the prospect of soon beholding her beloved cousin, burst into tears at the unexpected interdict.

"I must see her," she sobbed, "or I shan't believe she is here, and I've looked for her all day and all night. Just let me have one little peep at her, won't you? I'll keep still. I promise I will."

Mrs. Morris took the child by the hand and led her to the closed door. This she softly opened, and, not allowing the little girl to cross the threshold, she let her look within the chamber to satisfy her that her lost relative had indeed been found.

Lina looked eagerly in, and beheld her loved Clara lying pale and still upon a bed, whose spotless linen was no whiter than her own wan face. A cry would have escaped the little girl's lips had not Mrs. Morris put her hand upon her mouth in time to prevent it. The child turned away, and throwing herself into a chair rocked herself to and fro, moaning:

"Oh, she will die! I know she will die!"

"Oh, no, my child," said Mrs. Morris, soothingly. "If we are all very quiet and take excellent care of her, she won't die, but will soon be strong and well again."

"Oh, I don't believe it," still moaned Lina. "She's so pale and still, I know she will die."

"Would you like to help to make her well?" said the motherly woman, suggestively.

"Yes, I would. Of course I would; but what can I do?"

"You can be a little woman, and if you can stay awhile, you may sit here very still, and after a time you can perhaps go into Miss Clara's room and sit by her and hold her hand, maybe."

Lina's wet hat and shawl were off in an instant. She knew that no anxiety would be felt at home concerning her absence, and even if there had been, she was in the mood to disregard it.

Obedient Mrs. Morris's kind instructions, she moved her chair near the stove, towards which

she held out both her little soaked feet that they might dry, and while thus engaged she heard a whispered conversation between Bartholomew and his mother.

"Did you see Mr. Earnshaw?" she asked.

"Yes, mother, I did, but I got no civil answer from him. I waited for him more 'n hour in the rain, and when he come he wouldn't hear a word I had to say—said he hadn't time to talk to boys and that I must come again."

"Did you tell him your errand?"

"Haden't a chance, mother, he was so short and quick. He didn't say nothin' to me, but to tell me to run off and come another time. I guess if he'd a stood in the rain as long as I had, he'd a known 'twan't so nice a thing to be shoved off like he shoved me."

Mrs. Morris sat down in evident perplexity. The condition of her patient was such that other aid than her own must be secured. Medical attendance was necessary, besides suitable food, and many other comforts which to an invalid are indispensable. Whatever Mrs. Morris had was at the service of the suffering young lady who had come to her house like a wounded bird seeking shelter, but that little was far from sufficient for the needs of the hour.

"I know of somebody who wouldn't have sent Bartholomew away like that," said Lina, who, having been an interested listener to the conversation between mother and son, now turned to throw out a suggestion.

"Whom do you mean, my dear?" asked Mrs. Morris.

"I mean Mr. Wardlaw, an old gentleman who came to our house yesterday and almost cried because Clara had gone away."

"Is he a kind gentleman?" asked the woman.

"Is he a friend of your cousin?"

"I expect he is, for he said he would surely find her, and that is more than papa said, for he didn't promise even to look for her."

"Do you remember where this gentleman lives?"

"I don't remember that, but I remember how he looks."

And Lina gave a rapid and graphic description of Mr. Wardlaw, whose kind face and manner had impressed themselves upon her memory.

"I know that fellow!" cried Bartholomew. "I seen him yesterday. I blacked his boots for him, I did, and I know just where to nab him!"

Without another word the boy started out on a fresh expedition, leaving his mother uncertain whether the newly-mentioned gentleman would prove a friend or one of those whom the sick girl, in her lucid moments, had prayed she might be protected from.

A moan from the next room recalled Mrs. Morris to her post, and Lina was left alone with her own thoughts. Had she been the same child as a few months before, she would have wilfully followed her cousin's nurse and entered the sick chamber in spite of all prohibition; but to-day poor Lina was to take a deeper insight into life's tragedies—perhaps the shadow of approaching doom already lay across her path and subdued to obedience the wild will which once held her captive.

An hour—two hours—passed and still the child sat quietly before the stove in the little parlour, though the wet shoes were long since dry. Once Mrs. Morris had come out of the sick room with a cup in her hand, in which she poured a mixture which had been steeping and simmering on the stove.

"Be patient, dear child," she said, softly. "Time seems long to you, but it will soon pass."

She returned to the next room, and Lina was again alone. She at length, for mere diversion, began to ponder upon the life in her own home. She looked at the clock. At that hour her mother and Mabel usually took their lunch, but now, she thought, her mother must be taking it alone, and she pictured to herself the familiar surroundings of her father's home, the handsome dining-room untenanted since by its handsome mistress and the serving-man behind her chair.

Then she wondered where Mabel could have gone, and if anyone at home would think that she, too, had gone off never to come back. She fancied John's consternation if her mother should happen to ask him what had become of her; for within the last twenty-four hours she had seemed to be given into the man's keeping, and the child inwardly laughed when she thought of the clever way in which she had escaped them.

Her thoughts would have taken other flights had occasion further favoured; but she was interrupted by the loud sound of feet stamping snow outside, and the door immediately opening, she beheld not only Bartholomew and Mr. Wardlaw, but Mr. Earnshaw also.

"Oh!" she cried, springing forward to meet them, "you have come to keep Clara from dying, haven't you?"

Mr. Earnshaw caught the child in his arms and pressed her to his breast with a fervour which she could not understand, considering the fact that she had never seen him except on those trying occasions when, by her sister's orders, she had been borne struggling and screaming from the drawing-room at home.

Mrs. Morris also came forth and welcomed the new-comers with quiet gravity. In a few words she explained to them the circumstances which had doubtless led the wanderer to seek the shelter of her roof. She detailed her present sad state, and suggested that a physician should instantly be summoned.

Mr. Earnshaw immediately left the house upon that mission, and presently returned with an able practitioner. When the medical man passed into the sick room the door was left ajar, so that voices from within could be distinguished by those who waited so anxiously without.

Perhaps, also, some sounds from the outer room may have reached the sick chamber and have aroused the dull senses of the unconscious girl, for those in the outer room heard her move uneasily and wearily murmur:

"Wardlaw! Wardlaw! That is the name I have tried to recall; the one my mother charged me to remember, and which my uncle made me promise to—"

The tone died away into silence, for the fitful awakening had passed and again a lethargic sleep bound the invalid's senses. The two gentlemen exchanged significant glances, for both had heard the feebly-uttered words.

They awaited with beating hearts the return of the physician upon whose verdict the hopes of happiness of at least one member of the party hung. After a long interval he came forth, and in answer to their anxious inquiries told them that life was not to be despaired of, but that the case was a critical one.

"The young lady's nervous system has been strangely overtaxed," he said, "and now the brain is suffering in consequence. Some great mental anxiety must have oppressed the poor girl, and I should judge, too, that some change in her mode of life had wrought disastrous results. Who is she, may I ask? for it is evident she does not belong to these people," and the doctor looked around at Bartholomew and the humble appointments of the place.

"She is the niece of Alfred Lorraine," replied Mr. Wardlaw, with an unusual tone in his voice.

"Not the daughter of Arthur Lorraine?" asked the physician.

"The same," was the reply.

"Ah, I knew him well, and a nobler fellow never breathed. By the way, there was always a doubt in my mind as to his insolvency, but I suppose it's too late to stir up any such matters, for they seemed to be satisfactorily settled in other men's minds long ago, if I am not mistaken."

"Thank heaven, it is not too late!" ejaculated Mr. Wardlaw, in that same dry, almost harsh tone. "The world will doubtless soon hear strange things, doctor."

"I suppose I have already heard something of what you allude to," replied the talkative physician. "You allude, I suppose, to his daughter's elopement. It seems it was first

thought that some other young lady had run off with that rascally fellow, Langton—at least the Lorraines tried to spread that impression; but murder will out, you know, and now it's a well-established fact that it was their own daughter. The papers this morning contain an announcement of their marriage. It's all very well, of course, if the parties themselves are satisfied, but in my opinion Miss Lorraine might better have thrown herself into the river than to have married that scamp. She'll rue it to the longest day she lives."

Mr. Wardlaw felt a little cold hand clasp his own, and looking down, beheld the troubled face of Lina looking up into his own. She had not before known why Mabel had gone away, and this sudden announcement alarmed her. The doctor turned and looked at the child.

"Ah, sister, is it?" he said, when Earnshaw whispered a word or two in his ear.

He took the little girl tenderly on his knee and continued:

"Never mind, my dear, don't cry. Forget all about it. There's a good girl; and some day when you are a young lady yourself, old Dr. Ponsonby will come and dance at your wedding. But you must look sharp while he's capering and flitting about, for he may dance his spectacles off his nose, and they might trip up some gay young lady and her beau."

Lina laughed and dried her tears and the dapper little doctor, stooping to pat her cheek, and add some directions respecting the invalid to those already given, soon took his leave.

CHAPTER XXV.

AFTER the departure of Dr. Ponsonby, Mr. Wardlaw and young Earnshaw did not linger long in Mr. Morris's humble though hospitable abode. They only remained long enough to acquaint the widow with such details of Clara's recent history as it seemed necessary she should know, and Mr. Wardlaw supplemented this information with a generous gift of money.

"Oh, sir," the woman said, while tears of sincere regret moistened her eyes, "it cuts me to the very heart to take money on the dear young lady's account. She has been so kind to me, sir, that I would sell my last table and bed to keep her from want; but, alas! I fear everything I own, if I were to sell it, wouldn't suffice to keep her this side death's door."

"It is all right, my good woman," Mr. Wardlaw replied. "Your noble intentions are not doubted, but we all owe something to Miss Lorraine, and it is no more than just that other friends should assist you in securing her recovery. Besides, you need not hesitate to accept what I give you, for it belongs entirely to your patient. And not only that, but much more," he added, under his breath.

Earnshaw would have remained at the house to keep watch over his treasure, as he inwardly termed the lately found Clara, for misfortune seemed recently to so completely have hedged and bound her that he feared in his absence she would somehow again be spirited away.

He mentioned these fears to his friend, Mr. Wardlaw, but that gentleman possessed assurances which he had not shared with his comrade. He knew for a certainty that no one outside Alfred Lorraine's family would be interested in harming the poor girl, and he also knew that in that doomed family other events were approaching which would entirely abstract their thoughts from their suffering victim.

"Although I have asked your assistance in this matter of finding Miss Lorraine, I have not taken you into my confidence in another particular," Mr. Wardlaw said, as the two gentlemen quitted Mrs. Morris's door. "Indeed," he added, sily, "I think I have already confided more in you than you have in me."

Earnshaw understood the hint and quickly responded:

"If you mean by that, sir, that as yet you are unacquainted with the reason of my thus aiding you, I can tell you in a few words. Clara Lorraine has become very dear to me.

From the first moment that I saw her she touched my heart as it had never been touched before, and the more often I met her the stronger that feeling grew. I have never credited the base slanders which have been so maliciously circulated concerning her. I believe her a pure, noble, gifted, beautiful girl, a sorely tried, a long-suffering girl, and one whose exalted Christian principle alone enabled her to sustain the terrible ordeal which she has been called upon to pass through. In a word, sir, it is the dearest desire of my heart to make Clara Lorraine my wife."

Mr. Wardlaw looked at his companion a moment without speaking. He seemed to be taking a mental measure of the man and deciding upon his merits.

"Young man," he at length said, "it is possible that you have not looked upon every side of this matter. You may not have heard that Clara Lorraine is penniless."

"Yes, I have heard it time and again," Earnshaw replied, with a meaning smile. "I should know it by heart by this time, but it so happens that I do not believe it."

"Don't believe it?" repeated Mr. Wardlaw, eyeing his comrade suspiciously. "Do you then found your preference for this young girl upon any fanciful hints you may have heard thrown out as to her eventually becoming an heiress?"

Earnshaw suddenly stopped and looked angrily into the face of his questioner.

"If you were not an older man than I, and if I did not suspect you of speaking as you do not feel, I would answer your question as it deserves, and, trust me, you would never again feel like repeating it. What! I woo Clara Lorraine from a base motive? Never! I do not believe her penniless for this reason: I know that within herself she has resources which will always keep her from want. She possesses qualities which are far superior to property advantages. She has sterling worth, true independence, courage and energy, and with all these, such perfect feminine delicacy and tact as would assure her success in anything she might undertake. I have known her longer than you have, sir. I have watched her in many trying circumstances, and not once have I seen her calm spirit ruffled or her courage quail. Thank Heaven, I have enough to keep her from further toil; and if I am fortunate enough to win from her a favourable response to my suit, I shall deem myself the most fortunate fellow in existence."

Mr. Wardlaw reached out his hand and wrung that of his companion.

"You are worthy of her," he said. "It is possible that when next we meet Miss Lorraine may appear in a new role."

Mr. Earnshaw did not comprehend these last words, and he had no opportunity to ask for an explanation, for his friend excused himself from further companionship that morning, saying that a matter of extreme urgency called him elsewhere.

The two gentlemen accordingly parted, Earnshaw to return and haunt the vicinity of Mrs. Morris's house, and thus make sure that no further danger to Clara might be attempted, while Mr. Wardlaw, with rapid steps, sought the neighbourhood of Mr. Lorraine's house.

Mrs. Lorraine's disgraceful letter had been put into his hand just as he was starting forth with the messenger who led him to Clara's refuge, and, therefore, he had only time to briefly scan its contents; but that hurried perusal filled him with sensations which he could scarcely conceal.

His dislike of Mrs. Lorraine's character had steadily increased from the moment when first he beheld her standing in all her magnificent beauty the centre of an admiring fashionable throng. Later, when he comprehended the duplicity, the selfishness, the boldness of her nature, he would have shrunk from her as from contamination had not consideration for suffering innocence restrained him.

But the woman's last act filled him with a disgust, a horror, which he could not name, for not only had she thus debased herself, but she

unwittingly forged the last link in the chain of evidence against her husband. The letter declared that he contemplated a secret trip to America.

Why should he thus fly if a guilty conscience did not urge him to, and why should he have chosen this time if he had not received some intimation of the inquiries which Mr. Wardlaw had set on foot concerning his former transactions with his dead brother?

Before setting out for Mrs. Morris's house Mr. Wardlaw despatched a detective to Mr. Lorraine's mansion to maintain a strict watch and prevent, if it became necessary, any escape of its owner.

The steamer by which it had been ascertained that Mr. Lorraine, under an assumed name, had taken passage, was not expected to sail until the afternoon, therefore Mr. Wardlaw knew he should secure an opportunity of speaking with him ere it was too late.

As for replying to Mrs. Lorraine's letter, the thought of doing so was not considered for a moment. The bold woman had put herself beyond the pale of common courtesy. Her letter burned in the pocket of its recipient, but he could not destroy it as he wished, for it might yet prove a powerful auxiliary in the work he had to do.

He found the detective whom he had engaged in the vicinity of the house and from him learned that Mr. Lorraine was at home. Mr. Wardlaw, therefore, rang the bell and desired of the servant the privilege of seeing his master. The man responded that Mr. Lorraine was ill and could see no visitors.

"Give him this card," the gentleman responded, "and say that I exceedingly regret his illness, but must claim the right to see him."

The man departed upon his mission, but it was so long ere he returned that had it not been for the man watching outside Mr. Wardlaw would have feared that his errand would prove a fruitless one, and that Mr. Lorraine would baffle him by leaving the house.

After the lapse of what seemed to the visitor a full half hour, the servant returned and desired Mr. Wardlaw to follow him. He was led to the library, where he found the master of the house, who arose to meet his visitor; but what a change had taken place in the once handsome, self-confident man.

His countenance was haggard as if with anxiety and sleeplessness; his hands shook and his voice was harsh and unsteady when he spoke. Yet he tried to welcome his old acquaintance with an assumption of easy cordiality, but the mask was so thin that he presently dropped it and fell into a dull, apathetic manner which better suited his wretched appearance.

"I regret finding you ill," Mr. Wardlaw said, taking the seat which the other assigned him. "I accidentally heard this morning that you were going abroad and so I called to wish you a fair journey."

Mr. Lorraine started. "Idle reports!" he said. "It seems that a man's actions are determined before they enter his own mind."

"It may be so," Mr. Wardlaw responded. "If you will pardon the assertion, I think in this case the report is more than an idle rumour, and I have come, not only to say good-bye, but to have a little confidential talk with you."

Mr. Lorraine moved uneasily in his chair, and passed his hand across his forehead as if to smooth away that anxious frown which now was so deep that the lines would not be erased.

"I am far from well this morning," he said. "So if you could postpone what you have to say I would take it as a favour."

"Unfortunately I cannot postpone it," Mr. Wardlaw replied. "Were it my own affair I might do so, but as it concerns another, I feel it my duty to proceed."

Mr. Lorraine shaded his eyes with his hand and seemed to resign himself to the inevitable.

"Have you heard from your niece?" the visitor asked. "It is of her I wish to speak."

"No," answered the other, hoarsely, yet now

removing his hand and looking more steadily at his questioner. "Have you come to tell me that she has been found?"

"Yes," responded Mr. Wardlaw, with satisfaction, for he saw that the other expected no such reply.

"Ah! that is good news indeed. I trust the dear girl is well and happy."

"No, she is neither, but I am glad to be able to say that she has friends who will soon make her so."

Mr. Wardlaw drew nearer his host and continued:

"There is a strange story afloat concerning your niece. It is asserted that instead of being a penniless orphan, she is really entitled to a vast estate of which she has been most cruelly defrauded. Do you know anything about the matter?"

"No," answered Mr. Lorraine, mechanically. "I have heard nothing of the kind. It would be strange if it is true."

"It is said that this estate belonged to her father, and that he, being ignorant of business matters, became involved through the rascality of a near relative, and that that relative reaped all the results of his misfortunes. Darker things are still hinted at, such as forgery and the like."

Mr. Lorraine looked up with his haggard face, paler than before, but with eyes flashing with anger.

"Who speaks of forgery?" he cried. Then checking himself, he added: "If this is true, if my niece can prove her title to any large estate, there is no one who will congratulate her more than her uncle."

"Even though that uncle in the same breath should bewail his own poverty?" asked Mr. Wardlaw.

"Explain yourself!" shouted Mr. Lorraine, again starting up angrily and rising to his feet.

"Pray, sir, do not become excited. This is a matter which must be calmly met and freely discussed, else it may grow into a more serious affair than need be. As it now stands, a simple acknowledgment and full restitution will suffice, and the other part of the matter will be kept secret; but if sterner measures are resorted to, of course the thing will have to be brought before the public."

Mr. Lorraine's face grew livid as he cried:

"What is the meaning of these hints and these threats? Am I to be insulted in my own house?"

"No, sir. You are simply to listen to truth and reason," answered Mr. Wardlaw, calmly. "To make matters brief it will be necessary for you to fair and squarely face this matter. I assure you the task which I have undertaken is not a pleasant one, but having begun it I shall carry it boldly through. Your brother Arthur was my only and best friend. I have been too magnanimously treated by him to stand a quiet spectator of evil heaped upon his only child."

"Ha! Then it is as I feared and told Eugenia! Had she heeded my warning—had she obeyed me—all this would never have happened!"

"Is it the part of a man to throw the blame of his own evil doing upon a woman?" exclaimed Mr. Wardlaw. "Believe me, your wife has enough errors of her own to answer for without bearing the burden of those you have committed. Had your own career been an upright one you would not fear the consequences of her acts."

Mr. Lorraine quailed for an instant under this rebuke; but a moment later he flashed desperately out:

"Wardlaw, you should know better than to come here and try to frighten me as you would a child. I deny the damaging charges you hint at. I shall hold you responsible for making them. Without proof no man can intimidate another."

Mr. Wardlaw replied:

"I have not been so careless as to come here unprovided with proof. Let me assure you that the evidence of your wrong-doing is complete. I have only come here to-day to give you an opportunity to save yourself and your family the

obloquy of a public investigation, followed by the terrible consequences of your guilt. A crime which has been successfully concealed for many years is not necessarily forgotten and buried. It will arise at last, and the offender will be brought to an account. So, let me advise you, as one who would favour you as far as he is able, to seriously consider my proposal. Restore all that you have so long and so wrongfully held. Give it into the hands of its rightful possessor, and I can promise you, in her name, that your future, and that of your family, will be generously provided for. You can retire whither you will with your name untarnished by exposure to public censure. I make this offer, not to condone crime, but because you are Arthur Lorraine's brother, and because I know that such an offer would be in consonance with your niece's wishes. Go quietly away from the city, or, if you wish, remain in it, but make full and complete restitution of your unlawful possessions."

"Never!" shouted Mr. Lorraine, springing to his feet again, and clenching both hands with determination. "Why should I tremble at the threat of exposure? What have I to fear thereby? Proceed with your investigations. Secure the restitution, as you call it, if you can, but do not attempt to cajole or frighten me into acceding to your demands. Your accusations can never be confirmed; your claims are groundless; your threats I defy, and your promises I scorn."

Mr. Wardlaw looked at the angry man before him, and a pang of pity shot through his heart. He felt strong in the cause which he advocated, his own position was invulnerable, for he had that in his pocket which would bring the guilty man to his feet, but he resolved to give the brother of his early friend one more chance.

"Alfred," he said, impressively, "think once more. He advised by one who counsels you for your own best good. Accede to what I ask."

"Never!" again ejaculated the other, bringing his clenched hands down angrily upon the table.

"Then," said the accuser, "you force me to resort to a measure which I hoped might be unnecessary. I would have more pity for you than you will have for yourself. I would show you more mercy than you and yours bestowed upon your poor orphan niece; but you defeat my good intentions, you oblige me to wound you in your tenderest affections."

He produced a letter from his pocket and opened it.

"Alfred Lorraine," he continued, "I cannot offer you this letter without myself blushing for the shameless woman who wrote it. You will see for yourself what its contents portend. I scorn the writer as I do her mad appeal, but this I tell you, either agree to my just demands or this letter shall be published in every newspaper of the city."

He held the letter toward Mr. Lorraine, who, with pallid lips, straining eyes and unsteady hands, read the tale of his wife's perfidy. He read it to the bitter end, and his eyes grew glassy as he noted the bold signature at its close.

With a cry he fell backwards, and crossed his face with his hands.

(To be Concluded in our Next.)

POTATOES.

POTATOES were first introduced at Moscow by a Mr. Rowland, eighty or ninety years ago. At first the people would neither plant nor touch them, saying they were Satan's fruit, given to him on his complaining to God that he had no fruit, when he was told to search in the earth for some, which he did, and found potatoes. A curious Berwickshire legend, which, however, is palpably anachronical, attributes the introduction of potatoes into Scotland to that famous wizard of the North, Sir Michael Scott. The

wizard and Satan, being in partnership, took a lease of the farm on the Martoun estate, called Whitehouse. The wizard was to manage the farm, Satan managed the capital. The produce was to be divided as follows:

The first year Sir Michael was to have all that grew above ground, and his partner all that grew below; the second year the shares were to be the opposite way. His Satanic majesty, as is usual in such cases, was fairly overreached in his bargain, for the wizard cunningly sowed all the land in the first year with wheat, and planted it with potatoes the second, so that Satan got nothing for his share but wheat stubble and potato tops. And this scourging rotation Sir Michael continued till he had not only beggared his partner, but exhausted the soil.

In spite of this legend, however, we must continue to give credit to Sir Walter Raleigh for having been the introducer of potatoes into this country. The first that tried them, we are told, fell into the very natural mistake of eating the apples and disregarding the roots.

PRACTICAL PRAYER.

In the vicinity of B— lived a poor but industrious man, depending for support upon his daily labour. His wife fell sick, and not being able to hire a nurse, he was obliged to confine himself to the sick bed and family. His means of support being cut off, he soon found himself in need. Having a wealthy neighbour near, he determined to go and ask for two bushels of wheat, with a promise to pay as soon as his wife became so much better that he could leave her and return to his work. Accordingly he took his bag, went to his neighbour's and arrived while the family were at morning prayers.

As he sat on the door-stone he heard the man pray very earnestly that Heaven would clothe the naked, feed the hungry, relieve the needy, and comfort all that mourn. The prayer concluded, he stepped in and made known his business, promising to pay with the avails of his first labour. The farmer was very sorry he could not accommodate him, but he had promised to lend a large sum of money, and he presumed neighbour A— would let him have it. With a tearful eye and a sad heart the poor man turned away. As soon as he left the house the farmer's son stepped up and said:

"Father, did you not pray that Heaven would clothe the naked, feed the hungry, relieve the distressed, and comfort mourners?"

"Yes—why?"

"Because, if I had your wheat, I would answer that prayer."

It is needless to add that the Christian father called back his suffering neighbour, and gave him as much as he needed. Now, Christian readers, do you answer your own prayers?

THE testimonial absurdity will probably be considered to have reached its lowest point—Marwood has been presented with a tea-service.

It is proposed very shortly to increase the number of members of the Athenæum. Many hundreds of candidates are upon the books.

FABRIZI has sent out invitations to witness a new sensation at the Aquarium, in the shape of an extraordinary flying feat. Lulu is the performer.

A CLEVER way of curing men of their quarrelsome propensities was hit upon the other day by a Colonel of Marines at Portsmouth. There were two men in his regiment who were for ever fighting. Remonstrance was of no avail; punishment useless. He set the men to clean the whole of one side of the barrack windows. The men were made to clean the same windows at the same time, one inside and the other out. After rubbing hard at each other for a dozen windows they broke down, laughed at the ludicrousness of the situation, shook hands, and have been friends ever since.



[THE LOVE LETTER.]

THE DOUBLE COURTSHIP.

"I'll leave Carlo, Dinah, and you can send it by him," and a low whistle brought a fine Newfoundland bounding to his master's feet.

Silently a farewell embrace was given, and Sam's tall, sinewy form passed rapidly among the trees, while Dinah and Carlo watched him until a curve of the road hid him from their view.

It was a pretty picture. The graceful mulatto, with the melting eyes peculiar to her race, stood beneath the branches of a spreading magnolia, fondling the dog, while the intelligent animal looked up into her face, as if trying to say, "I shall miss him too." Shaded walks wound away in the distance, white statues gleamed here and there among the green trees, and the murmurings of the silver sprayed fountains mingled harmoniously with the choruses of the birds. Surely additions of art intensify the beauties of nature.

Some time after, Dinah's mistress found her seated at a table, with pencil and paper, looking very much disconcerted. Adelle Ames was an orphaned niece of the owner of the farm, Mr. Merton, who had adopted her on the death of her parents, and given her Dinah for her maid. Her sweet disposition and kindness of heart made her dear as an own child to her uncle and aunt, while Dinah, whom she had taught to read and write, could not reverence her enough.

"What troubles you, Dinah?" she asked, kindly. "What are you doing?"

Dinah dropped her head bashfully, and replied:

"Well, you see, Miss Dell, I've tryin' to write a letter to—to—a friend of mine. I know how to make the letters, and I know what I wants to say, but some way or other, I can't get 'em jined."

"Come to my room, Dinah, and I will help you." Seating herself at the writing-desk, she asked, "To whom is the letter, Dinah?"

"It's to Sam," stammered the girl.

"Who is Sam?" gravely said Miss Ames.

"He lives on Massa Richardses' farm, and is Massa Bert's own 'ticular servant, ma'am," was Dinah's indirect answer.

"Master Bert's?" said Miss Ames, inquiringly.

"Yes, Miss Dell, he am Massa Richardses' son as am jess come home from—from somewhere—Sam told me—somethin' like a school."

"College," suggested Miss Ames.

"Yes, ma'am, that's it."

"Is Sam any relation to you?" asked Miss Ames.

"No, Miss Dell," simpered the girl.

"Ah, I see. Your lover, is he? Well, how shall I begin the letter, and what do you want to say?"

"Please, Miss Dell, won't you begin it as is the proper way."

"Why, Dinah, how do I know what the proper

way is? You do not suppose that I ever wrote a love letter, do you?"

"I guess Miss Dell knows how," laughed Dinah.

"Well, I'll write, 'Dear Sam.' Now, what next?"

Dinah wrinkled her brow in earnest thought, gazed out of the window abstractedly, and finally said, in despair:

"Oh, Miss Dell, everything is clean gone out o' my head! Won't you please write jess what you like, only tell him that since he was here I've been very, very happy."

Saying this, the girl hurried off out of the room, as if to render refusal impossible.

Dell smiled, saying:

"My first attempt at a love-letter. This is certainly amusing."

She took her pen and wrote:

"DEAR SAM,

"I think of you all the time. I remember all the words that you speak to me, and when you leave me I whisper them over to myself, and they make me very happy. The sunbeams of morning bring a message of love from you, and when I look up to the stars, I remember that they are looking down on you, and throw kisses to them, hoping that they will carry them to you. For ever and ever your own DINAH."

She called Dinah and gave her the letter, amused to see the expression of satisfied delight on the dusky features as she exclaimed:

"Oh, Miss Dell, I's feared he'll think I never wrote it?"

The letter was soon fastened to Carlo's collar, who bounded off in delight to find his master. Sam read the letter, showing all his ivories in pleased amazement.

"Lor-a-mighty? Whoever 'spected Dinah could write such a buteful lettah? Shuah, nevah dare write an answer to it."

"Halloa, Sam, what have you there? A love-letter?" called out Bert Richards, catching sight of the delighted man.

"It's a lettah, sah," began Sam, shifting from one foot to the other in his excitement, "from a friend of mine, sah."

"From your sweetheart, you mean. Well, you're a lucky dog. I wish I had a girl to write to and to get nice, loving letters from. It's direfully dull down here. Oh, for another year of college life!" And Bert walked slowly away, whistling the "Danube River" softly to himself.

During his master's soliloquy Sam had been edging nearer and nearer him, his countenance bearing the excited look of a man who has an idea.

"Please, Massa Bert—"

"Well, Sam?"

"Did you say, Massa Bert, as how you wished you had a—a—"

"Had a sweetheart to write to? Yes, Sam, what of that?"

"Well, Massa Bert this here letter what Dinah wrote me is so mighty fine that I doesn't dare answer it, sah, and as you was a wishin' Massa Bert, for a—a—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Bert. "You mean, Sam, to put it in plain English, that you want me to answer the letter for you."

Sam's response was a face illuminated by the ivories and a low bow.

"Well, come along—give me the letter and tell me about her, and I'll do it up brown."

He took the letter and read it.

"No coloured woman ever wrote that," said he to himself; "but there's no need of enlightening him. 'Where ignorance is bliss,' &c. Then he said aloud, "Dinah, and where does she live, Sam?"

"At Massa Merton's, sah. She am Miss Dell's maid, sah."

"Miss Dell? Why, Mr. Merton has no children."

"She am his niece, sah. He 'dopted her while you was away."

"Ah, ha!" mused Bert. "Miss Dell wrote this letter, or I'm marvellously mistaken. It is

pretty, dainty handwriting, essentially womanly and yet the firm, downward strokes show steadiness and strength."

Looking up from his scrutiny of the letter, he asked:

"Is she pretty, Sam?"

"Who, sah?"

Bert burst into a peal of laughter.

"Of course you think your Dinah is pretty. But this Miss Dell, how does she look?"

"She am very good lookin', sah, 'cording to my judgment," and Sam drew himself up with the dignified air of a critic. "Her hair is jess like the clouds way in the west, when the sun is down low, and leaves 'em all a bright gold, while the shadows of the night," and Sam's voice sank to an impressive depth, "are soberin' the brightness down a little. An' her eyes are as dark as—as," and Sam looked desperately round for a simile, "as the midnight."

"Well, well, Sam, you are growing quite poetical. How would it do, now, to write an answer in poetry?"

"Laws, Massa Bert, that 'ud be mighty fine; but Dinah might 'spect I didn't write it."

"Not if you talk to her like that," laughed Bert, as he turned to the table and took pen and paper preparatory to writing. "Why, Sam," he said, "the boys at college sing about your sweet-heart," and his rich tenor voice rang out the merry song:

There was a girl named Dinah over there,
There was a girl named Dinah over there,
There was a girl named Dinah,
And her cheeks were made of china,
You may kiss her if you find her,
Over there—over there!

"I'll warrant you've kissed her, you rascal! Be off, now, and I'll call you when the answer is ready."

Exit Sam, illuminated as usual.

"A cigar first, for inspiration. This is really the first fun I've found, down here. Yes, this is pretty handwriting, and I am sure it is emblematic of her character. By Jove! I'm in love already. What a confounded joke it would be on me if the Dinah did write it? Dell, Dell, plague take it!—I wonder what her last name is? Sam, Sam!"

Sam appeared at the door, wondering evidently if his young master had finished his poetical effusion in so brief a period of time.

"What is her last name, Sam?"

"Macon, sah, Dinah Macon."

Bert burst into a peal of laughter, and just as he was sobering down a glimpse of Sam's astonished and indignant face once more convulsed him.

"I mean Dell," he said, at length, Miss Dell. What is her last name?"

"Don't know nothin' 'bout it, sah," answered the ruffled Sam, as he beat a hasty retreat, leaving Bert still laughing heartily.

"Now for the poetry for Miss Dell, not for Dinah. I wonder if she will not surmise who is its author?"

His ready pen very soon produced the following verses:

Though fate now doth keep us
Apart and alone,
It will not for aye be thus,
Darling—my own!

Some time in the coming days
United we'll be,
Cupid shall fan the blaze
For you and me.

Bright as the stars above
My thoughts of you;
Firm as the sky above,
Tender and true.

Ever be faithful, dear,
Love me alone;
Always believe me, dear,
Only thine own.

SAM.

"There! that is, moderate enough, so that a smart half-caste might have written it. If the next letter is in the same handwriting, she shall have some better verses."

He called Sam, who appeared, still looking rather indignant, but who was immediately illuminated on reading the verses.

"T's a thousand times obliged to you, Massa Bert."

"All right, Sam, and if you want any more written, let me know."

Sam made a low obeisance, and hastened to find Carlo and send his poetry.

Dinah's delight over the letter knew no bounds, and she displayed her treasure triumphantly to her mistress. Miss Ames read and duly admired the wonderful production, also promising to write another letter soon. As Dinah went off hugging her treasure, she smiled, saying to herself:

"Sam did just as Dinah did, and Mr. Bert wrote that letter. I wonder if he had any suspicions as to who Dinah's amanuensis was?"

Some time after, the faithful Carlo brought the following letter to his master:

"MY OWN DEAR SAM:

"You almost took away my breath with your beautiful verses. I showed them to Miss Dell, and she said she would have thought a college boy had written them. I send you some flowers, for I know you love them as I do. The fragrant heliotrope says 'I love you'; the sweet rose geranium speaks of preference, and the forget-me-nots need no interpretation. 'The sweet forget-me-nots that grow for happy lovers.' Then these little blue darlings belong to us, Sam. You may be sure that your words of love are treasured in my heart, and that I shall always be your own

"DINAH."

Sam went to his master's room, illuminated by the ivories. Bert was reading, and glancing up, said:

"What is it, Sam? A letter? Lay it on the table, and I will write the answer when I have finished this chapter."

Bert, the deceitful fellow, only waited until Sam was fairly out of the room, when he opened the letter with a haste that would have marked him as a most ardent lover. An impressive man, and after many a flirtation still heart-free, his fancy had been caught by Sam's description of the as yet unseen Dell. Many times had he pictured her in his imagination, but had not quite come to a determination to try to see her, and now he poured over the writing, noting each delicate curve of the letters, and thinking of the fair hand which held the pen.

"Same writing, yes, by jingo! College boy? eh? Ah, ha, Miss Dell, you surmised, then, the origin of that poetical effusion. I wish I dared steal the flowers. Sam will never miss them. If he does he can get some more. They are arranged so gracefully that I am sure it is not Dinah's work." And the flowers disappeared into a pocket-book.

After a half hour of busy writing he called Sam, who took his letter and the answer from the table, and then, hesitating a moment, said:

"Did Massa Bert see the flowers?"

"Flowers—flowers," said Bert, abstractedly, who had immediately become absorbed in his book when Sam entered. "You must have dropped them. I noticed a reference to flowers in the letter. Never mind, Sam, she will give you some more." And as the door closed behind the unsuspecting Sam, Bert chuckled to himself as he took a peep at the precious flowers, safely stowed away.

And now Miss Dell once more sits down to her desk to write an answer to Sam's last letter. She reads it through aloud:

"MY ONLY LOVE:

"Your letters are such a comfort to me! But how inadequate is the voiceless paper to express the emotions of the soul! It takes pages of writing to tell what a pressure of the hand or a glance of the eye might much more forcibly speak. I hold your letters in my hand and press them to my lips when I think that they come from you, and I gaze upon them until I can almost see your dark eyes looking into mine, and hear your sweet lips speaking words of love.

Open thy dark eyes wide upon me,
Speak to me words of love,
Words that will follow and guide and help me
Whithersoever I rove.

Thy smile is the sunbeam brighter than day,
Thy voice is a brooklet's song,
And I'll love but thee for ever and aye,
And my love is sure and strong.

Your own,

SAM."

The answer was soon written and despatched.

"I am sure," mused Dell, "these letters are written to me. And yet how absurd, when he has never seen me."

As Dinah soon after came into the room, Miss Ames asked her to describe Mr. Bert.

"I's never seed him, Miss Dell, but Sam, he says he's a perfect 'Pollo, whatever that may be. He's got light brown curlin' hair, and it waves back off from the most handsomest forehead you ever saw—and his eyes is just like two pieces of the blue, blue sky."

Dell sat by the window leaning her cheek on her white hand and looking up to the sky, seeming to see a fair face looking down at her.

Whose eyes, like blue forget-me-nots in rain,
Deepening, o'erwaved by mist of shadowy hair.

Suddenly Carlo bounded into the yard, and she waited with almost feverish impatience until Dinah should bring for her inspection the note which she saw fastened to the dog's collar. Her quick eye detected what Dinah did not see, that the first letters of the four lines of each stanza spelled the name "Dell."

Darling, I'm eager to see you,
Eager, too eager to rest,
Longing to whisper unto you
Love that is burning my breast.

Dare I come over to-morrow,
Even at twilight's calm time?
Laughing, we'll banish all sorrow,
Loving, we'll never repine.

Dearest, I pray you send to me
Even this dog a reply;
Longingly wait I your answer:
Loved one, for you I would die.

Dinah was all excitement.

"Please, Miss Dell, can I tell him to come?"

Miss Ames consented, not without an inward wondering as to what the result would be, and Carlo dashed off with an affirmative answer to the two lovers who were anxiously awaiting his appearance.

The next morning Mrs. Merton tapped at the door of Miss Ames' room, saying:

"Dell, I wish you would come downstairs. A son of one of our neighbours has called, and I wish you to meet him."

After a moment's delay Miss Ames hastened down the stairs and swept proudly into the room. She was a little above the medium height of woman, with a slender, symmetrical figure, which the closely-fitting black robe well defined. The darkness of her dress was unrelieved save as it met the slender white neck and shapely hand. Her golden hair fell from her head in a mass of shining curls. Her dark eyes met the blue ones proudly, and, while saying to herself, "A perfect Apollo, truly," she was receiving him with the manner of a queen to an obedient subject.

The hero of his class at college—where ladies were concerned—Bert was dumb before this proud beauty, and murmured to himself, "I am almost afraid she did not write those letters."

The evening passed pleasantly, and Bert carried away with him the permission to call again. He found the evenings spent with the "proud beauty," as he still called her, not only pleasant but profitable, for her intellectual acquirements were as perfect as the beauty of her face. Acquaintance ripened into friendship, and friendship into intimacy. Now it was a walk at sunset through the shady groves—now an exhilarating horseback ride—now a new book to be read and criticised together, or a new song in which their voices blended harmoniously. So the days glided by.

One evening they sat in the bay window, where the mellow moonlight streamed in through the lattice work of Virginia creepers, and, looking out, they saw Sam, who always accompanied his master, walking arm-in-arm with Dinah.

"When I look up at the beautiful stars," said Bert, very gravely, "I throw kisses to them, hoping they will carry them to you."

And Dell answered, just as gravely:

"How inadequate is voiceless paper to express the emotions of the soul!"

Bert's voice quivered with suppressed laughter as he said:

"Thesweetforget-me-nots that grow for happy lovers."

And Dell, laughing, replied:

"Thy smile is the sunlight brighter than day,
Thy voice is the brooklet's song;
And—"

But she paused as she remembered the declaration of love contained in the following lines.

Bert's laughter was gone now as he sprang to a chair by her side, and imprisoned the white hands in his own, saying:

"Dell, darling, can you not, will you not, say it all?"

"And I'll love but thee for ever and aye,
And my love is sure and strong."

The moonbeams shone full on his handsome face, and touched Dell's golden hair into an aureole. In the intense silence of love they sat until she lifted her dark eyes to his, and he saw them eloquent with unspeakable assurances of affection. All lovers know what followed—how the dear old story was whispered over and over, and became but sweeter for the repetition.

Some months after, two happy wedded pairs stood on the deck of an ocean steamer.

"Sam," said Dinah, as they stood watching with wide open eyes the huge waves at play, "there ain't no knowin' what may happen on this big ocean, and I wants to 'fess somethin'."

Sam's face darkened.

"There ain't nobody else?" he began, his jealousy aroused.

"Oh, no, Sam!" she interrupted. "But—but, Sam, Miss Dell, she wrote those letters."

Sam's face brightened with the customary illumination as he answered, with a chuckle:

"We's even, den, Dinah, 'cause Massa Bert wrote mine for me."

And Bert and Dell watched them from a distance as they talked happily together, and the golden stars looked down and smiled as they ever do on true love.

F. B.

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

THE DRAMA.

ROYAL AQUARIUM, WESTMINSTER.

THE first of a series of grand concerts, under the direction of Sir Julius Benedict, has been given at the above commodious and popular resort. It was not surprising that a programme including such compositions as the overtures to "Oberon" and "La Sirene," Wagner's march from "Tannhauser," a selection from "La Traviata," and the conductor's popular march "Alfred and Marie," performed by an orchestra of 120 executants and the band of the Coldstream Guards, independent of such vocalists as Mesdames Patey and Osgood, and Signors Carrion and Foli, should attract a more than ordinarily large concourse of music lovers, who must have been thoroughly gratified by the exceptionally brilliant execution of both vocal and instrumental selections. Mesdames Patey and Osgood charmed all auditors, and Signors Carrion and Foli were deservedly applauded. The solo instrumentalists were Mons. Alard and Mr. R. Robshaw on violoncello and cornet respectively.

Mons. Charles Dubois ably officiated as assistant conductor. There is little doubt but that the popularity of these concerts will be sustained, and that the increased support of amateurs and the public may be relied on during the series.

OPENING OF NEW SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE.

THIS elegant theatre was opened on the 9th inst. by Mrs. Bateman, the performance consisting of "Rob Roy." A full description of the building has been published in these columns, and we may add that now the internal decorations are completed the result, as viewed by gaslight, is most pleasing. A good view of the stage can be obtained from all parts of the house. Prior to the play Miss Bateman (Mrs. Crowe) appeared before the beautiful act-drop, painted by Mr. O'Connor, representing Sadler's Wells a hundred years ago, and recited a poetic address, specially written by Mr. Tom Taylor, which appropriately dealt with the past history of the site on which the new theatre has been erected. Miss Bateman met with a most enthusiastic reception, and delivered the address most eloquently. We extract the following passage:

"Here Kean his childish treble first essayed,
Of Braham's boy-notes trial here was made;
And here—immortal glory of the place—
Grimaldi showed his monkey baby face;
Grinned his first grin, his first hot poker swung,

First sausage boned, first, last 'Hot Cod-lins' sung.
Then, when the tide of long success waxed low,

A happy thought brought literal overflow;
Turned tap, filled tank, and low!—the house to cram—

The British Tar in 'real water' swam!
Here 'William'—T. P. Cooke—with Black-eyed Sue,

A hundred nights 'blessed his dear eyes, and drew;

Till, when 'en British Tar in 'real water,'
Of his old power to draw fell short and shorter,

When 'en Clown's red and white turned blue and yellow,

And Melodrama grew more stale than mellow,

Old Sadler's Wells' dry bones that slept, bemired,

By brave old Phelps with a new life were fired."

Miss Bateman has produced "Rob Roy" according to the traditions of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, with correct national costumes and appointments, and the wild Scottish scenery is very beautiful. Gilroy's troupe of Highland dancers and pipers are specially engaged. The impersonations of Rob Roy by Mr. W. Bentley, of the Bailie Nicol Jarvie by Mr. E. Lyons, and of the Dougal by Mr. R. Lyons, were most excellent; Miss Bateman as Helen Maegregor, though she did not appear till the last act, gave an impetus to the interest evinced in the play, her performance being replete with dramatic intensity. A mode of praise is due to Mr. Wyndham as the brave Captain Thornton; but with regard to the remainder of the characters it were a charity to say nothing.

At the close of the play the National Anthem was sung by the company, at the conclusion of which the immense audience with one accord called loudly for the Bateman family, who with the principal performers appeared before the curtain and bowed their acknowledgments.

ST. JAMES'S THEATRE.

MESSES. HARE AND KENDAL are now in possession of a house which, for taste, elegance, and comfort, is far in advance of anything the Metropolis has yet been able to boast. A flight of stairs made of Sienna marble, covered with

Indian carpet, and having brass standards on either side of the bannisters, conducts to the crush-room, which is fancifully furnished, draped with printed tapestry, and resplendent with mirrors. The walls are tapestried, and each doorway leading to the dress circle is draped with the simplest and most elegant formation of portiere curtains, by a mere looping back of the plain-cut hanging on either side. The auditorium is elegant and commodious, and of horseshoe form, permitting a good view of the stage from all points. The pit, though small, is convenient and easy of access, the well-padded seats being divided so that all corners may have their fair share of space. The stalls, of which there is a great number, are covered with red silk. They are sufficiently commodious, and there is plenty of room between the rows. The dress-circle contains 160 seats, the cushioned edge of the front being of crimson plush instead of velvet, and the seats commodious instead of cramped, as of old. There are fourteen private boxes with outer curtains of figured cherry red silk, and inner curtains of Madras muslin. The panels of the boxes are in gold, pale green, and cream colour. From the street to pit and stalls there are direct entrances, and abundant means of exit should remove all thought of danger in case of panic.

PRINCE OF WALES'S THEATRE.

THE first night of the last season of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft's management was distinguished by even more than the customary interest taken in the commencement of the regular campaign at the Prince of Wales's. "Les Bourgeois de Pont-Arcy" was brought out at the Vaudeville on March 1st, 1878. Mr. James Albery, in his adaptation, which is called "Duty," has reduced the comedy by an act and otherwise modified some of the incidents; but the main feature is in no degree impaired.

That "Duty," sparkling with those quaint conceits and happy metaphors with which Mr. Albery embellishes his adaptations, will add to the long list of successes already obtained at this theatre unequivocal proof was afforded throughout the evening. The play fixed the attention of the audience, as well as arousing them to frequent bursts of applause. The conclusion of each act was accompanied by the warmest greetings distributed again among the leading representatives; and when the curtain finally fell, within some twenty minutes of midnight, the clever adapter, Mr. Albery, was summoned and appeared to receive hearty and well-deserved congratulations.

SURREY THEATRE.

A "NEW and original" drama has been produced here, written by Mr. R. Dodson, divided into four acts, and entitled "The Thames; or, Adrift on the Tide." Mr. Dodson has before given the world some very good work, and his latest effort, for vigour of dialogue, for drawing of character, and for the startling nature of its incidents and "situations," will certainly bear comparison with all that has gone before bearing his stamp. Mr. William Holland has had the new drama mounted with much liberality, and the various scenes and "sets" ought to become the talk of playgoing London. The brush of clever Mr. C. Brooks has been used to the best advantage, the results being remarkably striking and effective.

BRITANNIA THEATRE.

THE dramatic fare at the Britannia Theatre is usually of a somewhat exciting kind. Strange adventures by sea and land occupy the stage, and the incidents are frequently such as to keep crowded audiences in a state of breathless suspense. They follow the fortunes of some domestic heroines who is possibly, for a time, in the power of a villain, and the thwarting of his nefarious schemes and the ultimate triumph of persecuted beauty and innocence eventually

bring down the curtain amidst tremendous cheering. But sometimes it happens that we get a simple little comedy at the Britannia, and when that is the case the excellent performers undertake the lighter kind of characters with a buoyancy and geniality which seem to indicate that the change from reckless rascality to cheerful comedy, from dark deeds to light laughter and comicality, is not unwelcome for the sake of variety. Such was the case recently, when a new comedietta, by Mr. John Levey, entitled "An Irishman's Heart; or, a Kiss of the Blarney," was produced with decided success. The domestic drama "Three Lives" and a variety entertainment completed the bill of fare.

MR. BILLINGTON'S services have been secured for "Toole's Theatre" in the double capacity of actor and manager.

THE members of one of the best travelling theatrical companies are now mounted on bicycles, we presume ladies as well the gentlemen.

It is understood that, not only that the Palais Royal Company have been engaged for a series of performances at the Gaiety Theatre in London next year, but that Mdle. Sarah Bernhardt will perform there from the 1st till the 31st of May.

At the Alhambra Charles Collette got off his quasi conundrum the other night in the "Princess of Trebizonde." "Think of an octopus, double it in three, add the whites of two eggs, the juice of a bitter almond, take away the supplement of to-morrow's 'Times,' and what's the price of Ostend rabbits?" The person to whom it was addressed gave it up.

THE main thought of the Adelphi new piece, "Rescued," is the main line of a railway called Burley Gap, where the train is to pass over a swing bridge—time midnight. The villain of the drama hopes by manipulating the mechanical arrangements, pinions, and eccentrics, to get rid of two travellers by the train, heirs to a property he has been sweet upon, even to the extent of forging a will. The heroine is, however, not far off—notwithstanding the drugging of the director or lower official who has the management of the swing bridge—and she, with her young man, restores order in the disturbed condition of the railway traffic. The idea reminds us slightly, of course only slightly, of the celebrated scene in "After Dark," where a railway train performed an important role. Mr. Henry Neville was clever as the engineer, and Miss Bella Pateman interesting as the heroine.

FACETIÆ.

STALE NEWS.

ACCORDING to a fashion journal, "Gold is and will be the rage." Really, when we come to think of it, we never—or hardly ever—heard of a time when gold was not! —Funny Folks.

NO "SPECIALS" ARE ALLOWED.

THE edict by which "special correspondents are forbidden to accompany the army in Afghanistan, but officers may contribute to the newspapers," continues to work admirably. This is the sort of thing that still goes on:

GENERAL ROBERTS: "Where's Captain Scribbell?"

ORDERLY: "Captain's got some 'copy' to do, your honour. Must send it off by next despatch."

GENERAL R: "Confound it! What's Lieutenant Blott about?"

ORDERLY: "Gone to Scubbulmbugger to get some information on camel supply. Has promised a letter on the subject to the 'Daily Blunderbuss.'"

GENERAL R: "Hang it! See if Ensign Pumice is in his tent."

(Orderly goes and returns.)

ORDERLY: "Ensign Pumice's compliments, and regrets he is particularly engaged. He is now interviewing some natives. Has to do an article on Afghan folk-lore."

GENERAL R: "Dence take it! Who's to lead the men into action? Just run over to Colonel Pothook, and ask him if he can spare time to take charge of a battery for a few hours."

ORDERLY (doubtful): "Don't think it's any good, your honour. I know the Colonel's very busy on that slater he's doing about the failure of the Commissariat Department."

GENERAL R. (in despair): "Upon my word the service is going to the devil!"

ORDERLY (who is a wag): "Yes, your honour—Printer's devil." —Funny Folks.

LET IT PASS.

Be not swift to take offence;

Let it pass!

Anger is a foe to sense;

Let it pass!

Brood not darkly o'er a wrong

Which will disappear ere long;

Rather sing this cheery song—

Let it pass!

Let it pass!

Strife corrodes the purest mind;

Let it pass!

As the unregarded wind,

Let it pass!

Any vulgar souls that live

May condemn without reprieve;

'Tis the noble who forgives.

Let it pass!

Let it pass!

Echo not an angry word;

Let it pass!

Think how often you have erred;

Let it pass!

Since our joys must pass away,

Like the dew-drops on the spray,

Wherefore should our sorrows stay?

Let it pass!

Let it pass!

If for good you've taken ill,

Let it pass!

Oh! be kind and gentle still;

Let it pass!

Time at last makes all things straight;

Let us not resent, but wait,

And our triumph shall be great;

Let it pass!

Let it pass!

Bid your anger to depart,

Let it pass!

Lay these homely words to heart,

"Let it pass!"

Follow not the giddy throng;

Better to be wronged than wrong;

Therefore sing the merry song—

Let it pass!

Let it pass! A. S. E.

STATISTICS.

CONSUMPTION OF SPIRITS.—The quantity of home-made spirits paying duty for consumption in the United Kingdom as beverage only was 14,540,097 gallons in the first half of 1877; 14,004,298 gallons in the first half of 1878; and 13,380,009 gallons in the first half of 1879, this last quantity being above a million gallons less than in the corresponding period of 1877. The quantity of foreign spirits imported into the United Kingdom and entered for consumption here was 5,143,750 proof gallons in the first half of 1877; 5,037,711 proof gallons in the first half of 1878; and 4,718,100 proof gallons in the first half of 1879, or 400,000 gallons less than in the corresponding half of 1877.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

PIGEON PIE.—Border a dish with fine puff paste; lay a veal cutlet or tender rump steak, cut in thin slices, at the bottom of the dish; season with salt, cayenne, nutmeg, or pounded mace. Put as many young pigeons as the dish will contain, with seasoning as above, and in the interstices the yolks of some hard-boiled eggs, put some butter over them, filled up with good gravy, cover with paste, glaze with the yolk of an egg, and bake.

VEAL WITH TOMATO SAUCE.—Take a piece of breast of veal, cut it in pieces an inch square, toss them in a saucepan with some olive oil till they begin to take colour; add a chafol finely minced, some French tomato sauce, pepper and salt to taste, and some minced parsley; let the whole simmer gently by the side of the fire, shaking the pan, occasionally, for about half an hour.

CELERY WITH WHITE SAUCE.—Trim the roots, and cut about six inches three heads of celery, wash them carefully, tie them together with string; put them in a saucepan, with an onion, a blade of mace, some whole pepper, salt, and sufficient boiling water to cover them. Let them boil till quite done, then drain them, remove the string, and serve with the following sauce over them; Melt one ounce butter in a saucepan, and mix with it a desertspoonful of flour, add as much of the water in which the celery was boiled as is wanted to make the sauce, put salt to taste, and stir in off the fire the yolk of an egg, beaten up with the juice of a lemon, and strained.

MISCELLANEOUS.

It is said that on Sir Robert Peel's estate in the Midlands, there are 7,000 acres unlet.

THE latest addition to Club life is that at Brighton—a Club for young ladies who are engaged in business.

THEY get some queer letters at a charitable institution in the City. The other day the secretary received an epistle beginning "I am mad!" By way of evidence of his insanity, he enclosed a cheque for a subscription. It is hoped that his madness may prove incurable.

THE model of the equestrian statue of Napoleon III., to be placed on one of the public places of Milan, has arrived at Florence. It is at present in the establishment of M. Galli, where the casting in bronze will take place very shortly.

THERE is a general expectation that when the time comes for Prince Leopold to wish to be created a Royal Duke, he will choose as his title that of Kent.

THE newest scare is "death in our clothes," and we are warned against arsenic in the disguise of many tempting hues, especially red. The next idea will be "arsenic in our friends," and we shall be warned off the red-haired and the ruddy complexioned.

A CIRCULAR is in the hands of the officers of the rifle corps, by which it would appear that the amalgamation scheme is to be pressed forward. The different corps are asked to state with which other corps they would wish to be amalgamated.

AMERICA is not to have all the profit out of our agricultural distress. The Canadian illustrated paper says: "It is now ascertained beyond doubt that this year's crop is the largest ever harvested in Canada. This fact is full of the most cheerful significance."

In a few days Druscovich, the detective, who, it will be remembered, was put in goal for the Goncourt fraud, will be out of prison, and an attempt is being made to get up a subscription for him.

THE Princess Louise, acting on the advice of her physicians, is coming to England. Her Royal Highness will probably return to Canada for the opening of the Dominion Parliament.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ANNIE.—If the gentleman received your letter his conduct is inexcusable in not replying to it. His silence places you in an embarrassing position. Still, you might write to him again, simply stating that you sent him a letter at a certain time, and asking him if he received it. It would be well to send your letter of inquiry by a messenger, and have it delivered to the gentleman personally. He may not have received your former letter.

H. D. P.—Such a marriage as the one you mention is illegal.

CRAMPED HAND.—It is a mistake to suppose you have a mental or physical defect because you cannot write properly. Writing is a mechanical art, influenced by intellectual impressions. Mere practice and attempted imitation will not always change the style of writing, but these efforts, under the guidance of sound principles, will do wonders. The difficulty of remembering what these principles are you will find entirely removed by Mr. Stokes, the well-known lecturer on "Memory," at the Polytechnic Institution, in a shilling book which he has published, entitled, "Stokes's Rapid Writing." With the assistance of this book anybody may speedily not only improve his writing but completely change his hand, or learn to write several hands without confusing them.

R. T.—The gentleman had no right to ask you what your feelings towards him were until he had declared his love for you and asked you to be his wife. A man who tries to get a young lady to commit herself with respect to her feelings for him before he has fully expressed his own feelings and intentions by an offer of marriage is to be distrusted. Therefore you should absolutely refuse to give him your confidence until he puts himself in a situation that will give him a right to it.

AN INVALID.—Apply to a chemist for a little alternative medicine.

E. G.—One remedy for the peculiarity with which you are characterised is to think less about it; others are cheerful companionship and outdoor athletic sports, such as cricket and boating.

W. B. C.—In small country villages, where there is little distinction in social position and everybody is pretty well known, the rules in etiquette are not so rigidly observed as they are in large cities. But your speaking to the young lady under the circumstances you describe might be considered rather presuming even in a village of only five hundred inhabitants.

JOSEPH.—As we have not the slightest idea as to what your employer's business is we cannot furnish the information you ask for. The best thing would be to tell your employer that you have never had occasion to make out such a statement, and ask him if there is any form for it in the office, or any copies of previous statements, that would serve you as a model.

CLAUDE DUVAL.—There are differences of opinion even amongst grammarians. Some would form the plural of the word convulsus by adding *es* to the singular; others would accomplish the same object by changing the final *us* into *i*.

HENRY.—Your position and means appear to entitle you to set about founding a house for yourself without delay. We should recommend you to fall in love with some young lady as soon as you can, to win her heart, and marry her.

IRENE.—Perhaps your parents might be able to assist you. Do they know of your correspondence with the young man? If they do not you should tell them about it, and hear what they have to say on the subject. When a girl of seventeen has written several letters to a gentleman, to every one of which he has neglected to reply, it is about time for her to stop writing.

MARIE.—Reverse the case, and imagine your lover to be corresponding with another young lady against your wishes. What would you wish him to do under such circumstances? A person who is engaged should be very careful about corresponding with anybody to whom objection is made by the other party to the engagement.

T. W.—Talk the matter over with your family, and let your father or brother take charge of it. When a girl attempts to manage such an affair herself she sometimes makes bad work of it.

WALTER & FRED.—The Editor declines to take notice of any letter which does not contain the writer's name and address (not for publication).

ST. CLARE. twenty-four, tall, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady possessed of means with a view to matrimony.

CIRCULATING PUMP, HIGH PRESSURE, and GAS PIPE, three seamen in the Royal Navy, wish to correspond with three young ladies. Circulating Pump has auburn hair, blue eyes, tall. High Pressure is fair, of a loving disposition, medium height, fair. Gas Pipe has dark hair, hazel eyes, fond of children.

MESSMATES' PET, CAPT. CUFF, and NELSON'S AVENGER, three seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with three young ladies residing in London with a view to matrimony. Messmates' Pet is twenty-four, medium height, fair. Captain Cuff is twenty-five, fair, blue eyes, loving. Nelson's Avenger is twenty-three, tall, dark hair and eyes, fond of music.

PHYSIOLOGY and BOTANY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Physiology is twenty-five, fair, fond of home, music, and dancing, medium height. Botany is twenty-four, tall, dark, fond of home and music. Respondents must be between twenty and twenty-three.

GENTLEMAN JACK, twenty-two, dark, hazel eyes, fond of home, a signalman in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with a young lady about eighteen.

CRYPTOGRAPH, a seaman in the Royal Navy, light hair, blue eyes, fond of music, would like to correspond with a young lady.

FRANCE, twenty-three, dark, medium height, would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-five, fair, of a loving disposition.

R. S. and E. S., two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen between twenty and twenty-three.

MABEL W. would like to correspond with a gentleman between nineteen and twenty-five.

THE FORSAKEN.

It hath been said, for all who die
There is a tear;
Some pining, bleeding hearts to sigh
O'er every bier.
But, in that hour of pain and dread,
Who will draw near
Around my humble couch
And shed one farewell tear?

Who'd watch life's fast departing ray
In deep despair,
And soothe my spirit on its way
With holy prayer?
What mourner round my bier will come
In weeds of woe,
And follow me to my long home,
Solemn and slow?

When lying on my clayey bed,
In icy sleep,
Who there by pure affection led
Will come and weep?
By the pale moon upon the rose
Upon my breast,
And bid it cheer my dark repose—
My lowly rest?

Could I but know when I am sleeping
Low in the ground,
One faithful heart will be keeping
Watch all night round,
As if some gem lay shrouded beneath
The sod's cold bloom,
'Twould mitigate the pangs of death
And light the tomb.

Yes, in that hour, if I could feel
From the halls of gloom
And beauty's presence one would steal
In secrecy,
And come and sit and weep by me
In night's deep noon,
Oh, I would ask of memory
No other boon.

But, ah! a lonelier fate is mine,
A dead, cold woe;
From all I love in youth's sweet time
I soon must go—
Draw round me my robes of white,
In a dark spot,
To sleep through death's long dreamless nig t,
Lone and forgot. H. F. H.

PET OF THE MESS and WEATHER LEACH, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies with a view to matrimony. Pet of the Mess is twenty-five, fair. Weather Leach is twenty-three, fair, good-looking.

MAGGIE and BRUCIE, two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen. Maggie is twenty-three, brown hair and eyes, of a loving disposition. Brucie is nineteen, brown hair, dark blue eyes.

LOVING HOME BIRD and REBECCA, two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen. Loving Home Bird is twenty-three, dark, domesticated, fond of home. Rebecca is twenty-three, fair, blue eyes. Respondents must be about the same age.

VIOLET and DAISY, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Violet is twenty, medium height, dark hair and eyes. Daisy is eighteen, brown hair, grey eyes, domesticated. Respondents must be good-tempered, fond of home and children.

MARRI, twenty-eight, tall, dark, would like to correspond with a young man about the same age, tall, and good-looking.

ALICE and EMILY, two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen. Alice is twenty-one, dark brown hair and eyes, thoroughly domesticated, loving,

fond of home and children. Emily is eighteen, medium height, light brown hair, blue eyes, good-tempered, domesticated, fond of home and children. Respondents must be between twenty and twenty-five.

LOVING LOTTIE would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-four, good-tempered, with a view to matrimony.

SNOWDROP, nineteen, tall, fair, dark brown hair, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a tall gentleman about twenty-one.

A VILLAGE GIRL, twenty-one, medium height, brown hair, grey eyes, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-two, tall, dark, and fond of dancing and music.

DARKE, twenty, tall, dark, of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, dark.

I SAY and HERE LOOK, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. I Say is twenty-two, medium height, of a loving disposition. Here Look is sixteen, fair. Respondents must be dark, and fond of dancing.

ELECTRIC JACK, DIAPHRAGM BILL, CARLE JOE, and AUTOMATIC HARRY, four seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with four young ladies. Electric Jack is good-looking, of medium height. Diaphragm Bill is twenty-two, fair, fond of children. Cable Joe is twenty-one, dark, good-looking, fond of dancing. Automatic Harry is twenty-two, medium height, fond of home and music.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

HARRY is responded to by—Wild Rose, twenty-two, medium height, dark, fond of home.

GEORGE by—Sun Flower, nineteen, fair, good-looking, fond of music and dancing.

CHARLIE by—Primrose, twenty, brown hair, hazel eyes, fond of music and dancing.

F. M. by—Katherine L., twenty-nine, a widow, dark hair, grey eyes, of a loving disposition, fond of home and children.

LOVING JENNIE by—F. S., twenty-two, seaman, loving, and fond of dancing.

LIVELY ANNIE by—W. H., twenty-three, seaman, very fond of music.

ALONE IN THE WORLD by—J. W. D.

A. M. by—Daisy H., nineteen, tall, fair, good-tempered, blue eyes, fond of home.

ROSA by—T. H. Lily by—G. H. R. May by—T. D.

ANNIE by—Truck and Funnel Tom, twenty, good-looking, tall; and by—Richard W., dark brown hair, hazel eyes, good-looking.

KATE by—Half Worn, nineteen, dark hair and eyes, medium height, good-looking; and by—Thomas T., light curly hair, blue eyes, loving.

F. W. B. by—Alice, seventeen, dark, of a loving disposition, thoroughly domesticated.

JUMPER GUY by—Mary the Maid of the Inn, tall, dark, handsome.

WILLIAM L. by—M. E. C., nineteen, dark hair and eyes.

CLARA by—Harry L. H.

ANNIE by—Harry, nineteen, good-looking, and fond of home.

W. L. by—Annie Maria, nineteen, brown hair and eyes, medium height, domesticated, of a loving disposition, fond of home.

LAURA by—Fred B., twenty-one, tall, fair, dark eyes, fond of music.

FROM IN UNDER by—Alice, twenty-nine, brown hair, tall, fair, good-looking.

SWAY THE MAIN by—Ruth, twenty-seven, tall, dark, good-looking, fond of home.

J. W. B. by—Clara K., seventeen.

WILLIAM L. by—Eva, nineteen, medium height, dark hair and eyes.

JOLLY GEORGE by—Mara, twenty, tall, brown hair, blue eyes.

DAISY MAT by—Ethel, fair, blue eyes, good-looking.

COMFORTER by—Clarice, tall, dark, of a loving disposition. Addresses must in all cases be sent to the office.

MIMMIE, Maud, and Rose did not enclose addresses.

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